

CONTEMPLATIONS

O N

THE OCEAN, HARVEST,
SICKNESS,

AND THE

LAST JUDGMENT.

I N A

Series of LETTERS to a FRIEND.

By *RICHARD PEARSALL.*

The SECOND EDITION, CORRECTED.

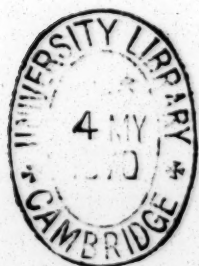


D U B L I N:

Printed for D. CHAMBERLAINE, in Smock-Alley;
and J. FISHER, in Kennedy's-Lane, Booksellers.

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P R E F A C E.

WERE it not that Custom has almost authorised the Reader to expect a Preface, the following Letters might have made their Appearance more abruptly in the World. I have little to say in Favour of the Performance, and should I say much against it, in Mr. *Prior's* Judgment, I injure my Cause, and become a Sort of *Felo de se*: I submit it therefore to the Public, and, as they will be my Judges, let me say what I will, with them I must leave it, only entreating *Candour*.

THE Subjects whence these Letters take their Rise, are very comprehensive; and, had the Epistles been writ by a better Hand, they might have proved an excellent Entertainment to the serious and polite Reader. Such as they are, if read with the same Honesty with which they are composed, I

humbly



humbly trust they may not prove altogether useless. But the Reader knows he is not to expect the Performance of an *Hervey* from any one besides himself. Those fine Images, that exquisite Colouring, that delicate Manner of drawing Nature's Scenes, and pourtraying the brighter ones of Grace, are peculiar to himself. And, I believe I should have the Concurrence of a Thousand Votes, should I say, that so charming a Fancy, so good a Judgment, so critical a Genius in Languages and Philosophy, so polite a Stile, and so devout an Heart, have seldom met in one Person. It was with good Reason then that the ingenious and pious Mr. *Gibbons* desired that so august a Subject as the *Ocean* should have been managed by him, as he hints in his Poem addressed to that Dear and Reverend Gentleman.

Hervey, proceed; for Nature yields
Fresh Treasure in her ample Fields;
Ocean's wild Wonders next explore,
His changing Scenes, and secret Store, &c.

THE Direction that *Horace* gives to the Poet to preserve an *Unity* of Design in *his* Performance, I have endeavoured to follow in *mine*:

(Sit quodvis simplex duntaxat & idem.)

Mine throughout has been to lead myself and Reader to Objects Spiritual and Divine, by Converses with those which are Natural; to warm and enlarge our Hearts towards the august Creator, the all-wise Manager, and indulgent Benefactor; towards that glorious Redeemer, who is the Foundation laid in *Zion* for apostate Creatures to build their immortal hopes upon; and towards that Sacred Spirit the New-creator, Preserver, Guide, and Comforter of all the Lord's People; and finally to raise our Desires to that glorious Inheritance, whither we are tending. Too frequent Converse with the Things of Sense, while we centre there, carnalizes the Soul; but it is good, it is necessary, through them, as through a transparent Veil, to look to Objects which are Spiritual and Eternal; Objects with which we have infinitely more to do than with all the sublunary Scenes, which, as so many shining Bubbles, are dancing before our Eyes, and, like them, will soon vanish away. If the Reader may find any Help from these Papers this Way, and make the Transition more easy from the Creature to the great Source of Existence,

he will have Reason to bless the God of all Grace, and not think the less favourable of the Penman.

IF I may but occupy the Place of an Interpreter to the stormy Winds and roaring Billows; and, if through my Attempt, they may speak more articulately of God, and any Heart may be made to reverence his Greatness, fear his Power, be constrained to fly to his Mercy, and put a becoming Value upon the propitiatory Medium of finding it, I shall exceedingly rejoice. If any Mind may be illuminated to behold the Divine Benignity, and the Blessedness of the true Christian as interested in the Favour of the most High, so as that the Heart may be engaged to put in for a Share in it, with that fervent, unceasing, unremitting Diligence which a Matter so momentous demands, and all this in the Way prescribed in the Evangelical Volume, I have my Desire, and shall esteem my Pains abundantly compensated.

I do not know whether any will judge with the more Candour, if I should tell him that these Essays were drawn up for Amusement at vacant Hours, and might have lain dormant

dormant much longer, if not for ever, had not some of them through Inadvertence, fallen into the Hands of a judicious Friend, who pressed the Publication with much more Earnestness than I could have expected. But what determined a Mind full of Jealousy to comply, was the Concurrence of others, whom the World, as well as myself, esteem good Judges; though still I think the apprehended Goodness of the Design may have biaſſed their Judgments, before they were aware.

SUCH as it is, I lay the Performance at the Divine Footstool, entreating that whether I am apprized of it or not, it may answer some valuable Purpose, by which the Glory of God, and the Redeemer, with the Good of my Fellow-creatures, may be advanced.

Taunton, Apr. 1753.

R. P.

To



To the Rev. Mr. RICH. PEARSALL, on
his CONTEMPLATIONS.

WHERE'ER we glance our wand'ring Eyes,
Ten thousand Wonders round us rise:
Earth, Air, and Seas, and Skies proclaim
The great Creator's boundless Fame.

But, Oh! how few, such Clouds of Night,
Involve the intellectual Sight,
Regard the Maker's obvious Rays,
And fewer still adore and Praise.

This HERVEY mourn'd; and fir'd with Zeal
For Heav'n and Man's immortal Weal,
With all a Seraph's Rapture show'd
How Nature's God through Nature glow'd.

Now in the Ashes of the 'Tomb
He read th' Almighty's righteous Doom:
Now trac'd his Skill through Walks of Flow'rs,
Enamel'd Meads and blooming Bow'rs.

'Then from the Night gilt round with Rays
Of Moon and Stars he taught his Praise,
Who gives their Orbs to shine and roll,
And bends their Journeys round the Pole.

Thus

Thus *Hervey* in a charming Vein
Ravish'd our Souls, and clos'd his Strain:
When sudden sounds a second Voice;
Our Ears attend, our Hearts rejoice.

So when one Nightingale has ceas'd
His warbling Song, and flown to Rest,
Another swells his tuneful Throat,
And the Groves bless the rising Note.

Pearfall, we hail thy Voyage o'er
The Deep, importing richer Store
Than all the boasted *Indies* hold,
The burning Gems, and flaming Gold.

Thine *Harvest* too our Praise receives;
Divinely full are all thy Sheaves,
That, in the mental Garner stor'd,
A rich immortal Food afford.

How pleasing, how august the Scene,
To see thy Spirit all serene,
Invite the Monster's threatening Dart,
While Heav'n shines o'er a dying Heart!

But, lo! th' Almighty Judge descends!
Tremendous Pomp his March attends!
The Trumpet sounds, loud Thunders roll,
And Lightnings flame from Pole to Pole.

Pearfall, O may thy Page remain,
To cheer the Saint, to cure the Vain,

Till

(x)

Till *Jefus* comes, thine honour'd Lord,
T'appoint thy Labours their Reward.

Then, while the Flames thy Work destroy,
May'ft thou, dear Man! 'midft Shouts of Joy
From Thousands thou haft blest, receive
Th' eternal Crown that Grace shall give.

London, Nov. 30.
1753.

THOMAS GIBBONS.

To.



To the Rev Mr. PEARSALL, on his
CONTEMPLATIONS.

THE happy Day which brought your Page
to me,

Brought on its Wings divine Serenity:
The Toils of Wealth, the eager Strife for Pow'r,
And sensual Joys were heard and wish'd no more.
Your *Sickness*, all my Soul with Pleasure spread,
Where Heaven's bright Dawn shone o'er a dying
Bed:

Your View of *Judgment* gave me rich Delight;
And hence I cry'd, "Whatever is, is right."
Christians shall gain when royal Grandeur fades,
A Crown immortal to adorn their Heads.
Hence, hence, adieu all sublunary Things,
'That hurt the Peace that *Contemplation* brings.

COULD I but trace the Wonders of my God
In such instructive Walks you lately trod,
I'd seize your Clue, and summon all my Pow'rs,
View and reflect through all my leisure Hours;
Then teach my Fellow-Christians how to sow
Those Seeds, which in Heav'n's blissful Climes
shall blow.

But oh! my Weakness and unequal Skill,
Check my high Wishes, and desert my Will:
But oft my Thoughts attentively shall roll
O'er your bright Pages, to inflame my Soul.

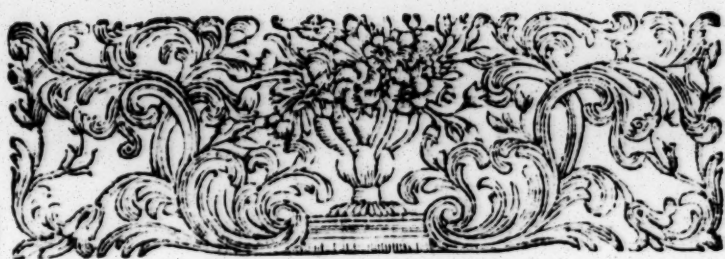
One

(xii)

One Spark attain'd of thy celestial Fire,
Will more than all the fabled Nine inspire.
Rais'd on your Wings, and raptur'd with your
 Strains,
My Soul no more of languid Pow'rs complains.

LETTER

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LETTER I.

On the OCEAN.

----- *And thou, majestic Main,
A secret World of Wonders in thyself,
Sound his stupendous Praise, whose greater Voice
Or bids you roar, or bids your Roarings fall.*

Thomson's Hymn, p. 240.

WORTHY SIR,



WHEN I set out upon my late Journey, I remember you was so obliging, as not only to forward me with your kind Wishes, but to express some tender Anxiety for my Safety; from the same Principle of cordial Friendship you insisted, that in the Progress of it, and upon my Return, you might hear from me. Desires of this Kind, from such a Friend, and express'd with an Air of Complaisance so peculiar to yourself, carry in them the Force of a Command. And now what Pleasure would it

B

afford

afford me, if any Observation of mine might be agreeable to you?

You may suppose, in the Course of such a Circuit, a great many Things occur'd, from which a Mind capable of any Impression might extract much instructive Delight. I took extensive Views, in the spacious Fields, of the Divine Subsistence, and found the Traces of his Footsteps in the closest Recesses. The SUN, whether rising or setting, or triumphing in its Meridian Splendor, with every varied Ray pointed me to a GOD: And when the MOON put forth her fainter Beams, or the *Stars* did but twinkle, they afforded me Light sufficient to behold a *Deity*. The *Winds*, whether they mildly whispered, or awfully roared, spake of that Being who *rode upon their Wings**. The Pastures of the Field, the Bleatings of the Flocks, the Lowing of the Oxen, the shriller Accents of the neighing Horse, joined to confirm the same Truth, and declared the Divine Glory. But the Birds, those charming Songsters, with a Variety of Voices proclaimed their Creator in more pleasing Notes. I could have imagined the pretty Linnets, hopping from Spray to Spray, as if they would bear me Company on Purpose to talk to me in their respective Warblings of him, whose Coverts are their Shelter, whose shady Forests are their Recess, whose Fields are their Garner, in whose Fountains they are losing their Thirst, and whose Protection is their Security: while

* Psalm xviii 10.

while the Lark was mounting over my Head, and, as it were, with eager Throat pouring forth her Mattins to him who dwells above those Skies, towards which she was soaring. They all proclaimed his Wisdom, who cloathed and distinguished them with their different Plumage, and furnished them with their various Notes; but methought they *dwelt* upon his *Goodness*, who *openeth his Hand and satisfieth the Desires of every living Thing* †.

THE Flowers unfolded their Embroidery, the Ground beneath my Feet spread wide its Enamel; and, while my whole Soul expanded itself to take in every Notice of my august Creator, excuse my imagination, if the *Apple* seem'd to redden into a deeper Complexion, as if it glow'd with Ambition to proclaim the overflowing Bounty of Heaven; while the *Trees* nodded their Assent with their stately Heads, and seem'd sometimes to bow so low, as if they were desirous to lay themselves at the Feet of his Majesty, who says, "The Earth is my Footstool ‡". Thus every Individual of the Products of Nature, if I asked them separately, tuned a Song to the Honour of the Deity; and then again they *all* joined in Chorus, and harmoniously fell in with the angelic Bands. * *Thou hast made all Things, and for thy Pleasure they are, and were created.*

BUT, while my Journey carried me along the southern Shore, and I had an uninterrupted View

of the grand watery Expanse, here my Meditation fixed. How immense the Bulk, how wide the Surface of the *Ocean*? while my Eyes are stretch'd to behold its Extent, but are disappointed, let my Thoughts, my mental Eyes, be directed towards its Original; and from the vast collected Mass of Waters, let me infer the infinite Greatness of him who gave them Existence at first, gathered them together on the third Day of Creation †, and perpetually governs them. Stupendous Being! who hath, as it were, scooped this our Globe, and fill'd up the vast Concave to the Brim with this wonderous Fluid; and still *measures these Waters in the Hollow of his Hand* ‡. How striking the Metaphor, when Jehovah compares himself to a mighty Giant, rising up with his Arm extended, to bring Salvation to his People, with his Fingers meteing out the Heavens, and spanning them to their utmost Boundary, and in the Hollow of the same Hand comprehending and measuring the great Deep! How grand the Allusion! whether designed to represent the Glory of God as worthy to be adored by all, or to engage his People to trust in him, and, in so doing, to be well satisfied. I can not, methinks, recollect any Representation equal to what I have mentioned, unless it is where the same Omnipotent Being compares the Ocean to an Infant *. He manages it with as much Facility as the Nurse orders the new-born Child; its impetuous Resistance is under his absolute Controul;

† Gen. i. 10. ‡ Isaiah xl. 12. * Job xxxviii. 8.
 &c. Vid. *Peol's* Annotations.

Controul; he wraps it in his Garment, and confines it in his Swaddling-bands; and, tho' it may be impatient as the peevish Suckling, tho' it may fret and give all the agonizing Signs of Frowardness, yet he speaks the Word, and the Waves obey him; all is immediately hush'd and still. If his Voice pronounces, "*Hitherto* "*shalt thou go, but no farther, and here shall* "*thy proud Waves be stayed* †"; a Restraint that cannot be dissolved, a Chain more firm than that of Adamant, encircles it, and confines the roaring Billows. With Prostration of Soul, O Sovereign Jehovah, I adore thy majestic Greatness! in this molten Looking-glass I behold its faint Shadow; thy commanding Voice divides the Sea, as it pleases; it ecchoes thro' all the Regions of the Deep; and, though it roar forth its Reluctance with never so much Impetuosity, yet I believe thine Orders are punctually obey'd; for *the Lord sitteth upon the Flood; yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever* * ‡.

B 3

INFINITE

† Job xxxviii. 11.

* Psalm xxix. 10.

‡ This Alpha and Omega, First and Last,
 Who, like a Potter, in a Mould has cast
 The World's great Frame, commanding it to be
 Such as the Eyes of Sense and Reason see;
 Yet if he wills, may change or spoil the whole,
 May take yon beauteous, mystic, starry Roll,
 And burn it like a useless Parchment Scroll. }
 Let Sea, and Air, and Earth, and Heav'n be made,
 And it was so.—And when he shall ordain
 In other Sort, has but to speak again,
 And they shall be no more.—

Prior's King Solomon.

INFINITE Power is not obliged to Means, can operate without them, or make Use of the most despicable. --- Behold a stupendous Proof! Who would have thought it? *He hath placed the Sand for a Bound to the Sea* †, and, lo! it proves as effectual as a Wall of Brass. Who then so hardy as the rebellious Sinner? for who with a Spark of Reason left will defy Omnipotence, and dare a Being that gives such a Demonstration of his Power? well may the Lord express himself with an Expostulation mix'd with Wonder, "*Fear ye not me, saith the Lord, will ye not tremble at my Presence, &c. **"

WHEN I survey the boundless Main, and contemplate the infinite Power of him who made and manages it, I immediately infer, and with a Divine Rapture cry out † *How blessed are the People, that have the Lord for their God! Can they want any Thing, who have him for their God, in whose Hand are the deep Places of the Earth, and the Strength of the Hills? whose is the Sea, for he made it, and whose Hand formed the dry Land* ‡? Does this Almighty Jehovah, compared with whom the Sea, and all its Fullness, is not so much as the first Drops of a Fountain out of the Rock to the whole Ocean, does he indeed bind himself by *Covenant* and *Oath* to the Heirs of Promise, and engage and pledge those *two immutable Things*, when he, says, "*Surely in Blessing I will bless you* §?"

How

† Jer. v. 22. * Jer. v. 22. † Psalm cxliv. 15.
§ Psalm xcv. 4, and 5. § Heb. vi. 13, &c.

How wonderous the Grace! how amazing the
 Condescension! how high the Privilege! how
 satisfactory the Security! how strong the Con-
 solation! --- I am all Surprise! --- Are they in-
 vited to pour out their Prayers into his Ear and
 unload their Cares into his Bosom? Is *he their*
Refuge and Strength, their present Help in their
Times of Trouble? then let them with Triumph
 say, "*Therefore will we not fear*.*" Though
 Earth and Hell are in Confederacy against them,
 how easily, instantaneously, and effectually can
 he controul all?

That Power who stills the raging of the Main,
 The Rage of all our Foes can render vain;
 To his unerring Will resign'd sincere,
 I fear that God, and know no other Fear.

Mallet.

I HAVE seen with a pleasing Wonder, while
 walking on the almost level strand, the Sea
 come rolling towards me, with one Wave turn-
 bling over another, as if eager to supplant my
 Steps and overwhelm me in immediate Destruc-
 tion; and yet, when the Surges have run their
 appointed Length, they have dy'd at my Feet
 and slunk away, as with a silent Shame and Dis-
 appointment. I would learn hence, while in the
 Path of Duty, and confiding in my God, to
 despise the Rage of Fellow-worms and the Tu-
 mults of the People, whatever malignant, me-
 nacing Aspects they may put on; and would say,

B 4

as

* Psalm xlv. 1, &c.

as to the threatening, but retiring Billows, with an holy, humble Scorn, "*Lo! where is the Fury of the Oppressor*? If God, this God who manages all, be for me, who, to any Effect, can be against me †?*" Difficulties may retard, nay, finally defeat the Operations of limited Power, but nothing can be hard to Omnipotence, equally, even infinitely *able to save and to destroy ‡*. Every Opposition shall fall before the Almighty, and his Favourites, as one Wave dies silently upon the sandy Beach, and another is dash'd and broken on the Rocks.

As inclosed in his Arms of *Power* I am safe, and may bid Defiance to every hostile Attack, so in his *All-sufficiency*, as an Ocean of Good, I may repose myself in Quiet, nay, may rejoice and triumph. He, from whom all the blessed Myriads above receive unutterable and eternal Joys, must be infinitely more than enough to fill my most dilated Capacities. Let others foolishly please themselves with Dreams and Shadows, and tell how rich they are, because a shallow Stream runs thro' their Lands, despicable at best, but soon, certainly, entirely disappearing as a Summer-brook in a hot Country; I will meditate on the unbounded, invariable Perfections of my Portion, bottomless and extensive as the Sea; and *as he that swimmeth stretcheth forth his Hands to swim* ||, so would I solace myself in my God with out-stretched and enlarged Affections.

Thou

* *Isaiah* li. 13. † *Rom.* viii. 31. ‡ *James* iv. 12. || *Isaiah* xxv. 11.

Thou art my Ocean, thou my God,
 In thee the Passions of my Mind,
 With Joys and Freedom unconfin'd
 Exult and spread their Powers abroad.

Watts.

LEARN, O my Soul, to cultivate, with an increasing Earnestness and a daily Application, Communion and Friendship with this mighty Being. Whoever frowns, entreat his Smiles, and let nothing short of his paternal Love manifested in *Christ*, satisfy thee. Dread above all Things his Displeasure. Never with *Jonah* fly from him, for he can from any Quarter send a Storm after thee, to reduce or sink thee. There's nothing got by contending with God but Sorrow and Calamities, unspeakably more afflictive than *broken Bones* †. The most daring Spirit trembles before him equally with the gentlest; as the stoutest Ship of War is toss'd hither and thither like a Feather, and dash'd with the same Ease as the lightest Shell of a Cockboat.

WHILE, with an increasing Surprise, I view the rolling Mountains of Water, and endeavour to form some Idea of the Vastness of its Collection, I prostrate myself with the profoundest Veneration, before the Throne of him who created and constantly manages the World of Waters, stills their hideous Roarings, and, as with a Bridle, turns them about wheresoever he

B 5

pleases.

pleases. But my Wonder rises, when I consider the first Principles of these Waters, their component Parts, from what small Beginnings they rise, and into which at any Time they may be resolved. How amazing is the Contrast! Water as it drops from my Finger is despicable, as it rolls before me in this immeasurable Bulk, 'tis tremendous. As it tended to aggrandize the Creator, I took Occasion to recollect some Remarks made by our Experimental Philosophers †. If a cubical Inch of Water, or any such small determinate Proportion contains so many distinct Parts, what must this Ocean before my Eyes contain? Surely it would weary the Industry and Skill of an Archangel to enumerate the Drops of the great Deep, one of which may be only just sufficient to wet the Point of a fine Needle! But there is not the smallest Particle, but what is the Work of thy Power, O thou Almighty God! and the Accumulation of such an infinite Congeries of Parts is under the Direction of thy Wisdom, and is held

† As the Honourable Mr. Boyle has taken worthy Pains in explaining the Subtlety of Matter in many other Things, so particularly in the Element of Water. By various Experiments he has proved it to be divisible to a surprising Degree. By his *Eolipile*, which is a small hollow Copper Globe, penetrated by a small Office, and an Ounce of Water put into it, and then set over the Fire for the Steam to push out, he found that the Water was rarefied to such a Degree, as that a Cubical Inch yielded more than Thirteen Millions of Parts. See the abovementioned Author, and Extracts from him in the Rel. Philos. V. III. p. 800.

held in the Hollow of thine Hand. All is under thine Eye, all is subject to thy most particular and accurate Survey. There is not one of the minutest Particles of this Ocean but what moves under thine impelling Hand. Thou beholdest it in all its Shiftings. Thine Eye follows each Drop, whether under the Line or Frozen Zone. I am swallowed up in Amazement. Words the most emphatical are inexpressive. Thoughts adequate to the Occasion fail me. I prostrate myself with Silence, and can only adore.

IN the Ocean I view the grand Fountain of all the Moisture on the dry Land. How soon would the Earth be Brass, and as inactive and barren as it was before the Divine Benediction on the third Day of the Creation, if it were not for these Waters? in vain with its gaping Jaws would it call upon the Heavens to distil a necessary Humidity. Those floating Watering-pots, the Clouds, would soon be exhausted, if not supplied from this great Reservoir. 'Tis true, it is *God that called for the Waters of the Sea, and poureth them forth upon the Face of the Earth**. Under the Direction of his Providence, and according to the Laws of Nature, the Sun-beams attract, and the Ocean readily yields from its Stores; the watery Exhalations are rarefied into innumerable fine Bubbles specifically lighter than the Air, and by this Means they naturally ascend with Ease, leaving their Salts behind them. The
Clouds

* Amos v. 8.

Clouds are formed, wafted abroad, distill'd gently in insensible Dews, or poured forth in plentiful Showers. Thus also *Fountains* are formed, break forth into Streams, and are swell'd into Rivers, 'till at length they fall into the Ocean again, and make a grateful Return of Benefits received. May this be an Emblem of myself, and all around me! O thou uncreated Ocean of all Being and Blessedness, it is from thy overflowing Fulness that I receive all my Supplies. I am protected, cloathed, and fed from thy free and rich Bounty; within thine all-circling Arms I live and move; constantly art thou giving forth and I am receiving: May I learn from the Stream of every Brook I pass by, to turn my Eye, to direct my Motions towards thee, and carry my Tribute of Homage thither, whence I derive *my all*! May I practise Benevolence to all around me? let my Waters refresh the weary, support the fainting, heal the wounded, and give a Verdure and Fruitfulness to the barren Soul! Let me, like the flowing Brook, take a transient, gentle Salute of the flowery Banks as I pass; but never, O never, let this Soul which thou hast created for thyself, O Father of Spirits, think itself at Rest, 'till it find itself in thy Bosom*.

THE

- * Teach me thy Rule of temp'rate Bliss,
 Pleas'd just thy flow'ry Banks to kiss;
 Yet by no Sweets allur'd aside,
 Still Ocean stops my swelling Tide.
 O may'st thou, Pattern wise, dispense,
 Moderate to taste the Charms of Sense,
 Still pressing to my wish'd Abode,
 Nor fix'd, 'till at my Center — God.

Sunday Thoughts, last Edit. p. 142.

THE Last of the following Lines is equally true of every River as of the River *Thames*: you have them in Sir *John Denham*.

Thames, the most lov'd of all the Ocean's Sons
By his old Sire, to his Embraces runs;
Hasting to pay his Tribute to the Sea,
Like mortal Life to meet *Eternity*.

AND indeed the Ocean is in many Respects, methinks, an Emblem of Eternity †; not only in its countless Drops and the unnumbered Sands upon its Shore, but peculiarly as it opens its Bosom and swallows up *all* the Streams in the World. Thus the awful and important Gulph, which you and I are hastening to, is daily filling, and yet there is Room for Nations of Men. A great Disparity there may be in the human Progeny in Point of Age, Riches, Gifts, and Grace; yet in this they all agree, that they are in continual Motion; which Motion is carrying them nearer to their everlasting State. Here are no *Jordans* standing still, or reflux towards their Fountains.

† Thus the *ingenious* Dr. *Watts* speaking of *Eternity* in his Lyric Poems, makes use of this Metaphor.

O that unfathomable Deep!
That Sea without a Shore!
Where living Waters gently creep,
Or fiery Billows roar.

There we shall swim in heav'nly Bliss,
Or sink in flaming Waves,
While the pale Carcase thoughtless lies
Amid the silent Graves.

Fountains. The Infant of a few Days or Years, thought I, is like that River which rose within the Reach of my Eye; and, just as it had promised fair for Service or Beauty, appears no more; while another disembogues itself near the same Place, after rolling many a League, visiting many a City, and increas'd by the Addition of many a Rivulet. A Representation of the Man removed in advanced Years! Though he pass'd thro' never so many Relations, was busied in never so many Affairs, public and private, had been warmed with more Summers than most, and could recount from his Memory more Transactions of Church and State than any of his Neighbours, and at length seem'd to stand *alone* amidst the Graves of his Cotemporaries, yet in a little Time the Ocean received him into its Gulph, and he was seen no more.

SOME in Life are like the rapid Stream of SEVERN*; they can brook no Resistance; they bear all before them, or they foam with Anger, and threaten Revenge. They are continually noisy and turbulent; sometimes their Passions quite

* *Sabrina* in Latin, and *Severn* in English, is no other than the ancient *British* Word *Savr*, or *Havr*, (for *S* and *H* are often changed in the Dialect of that Language) which Word we suppose had antiently *Violence* in its Meaning. Britan. Antiq. et Nov. p. 119. Alluding to this Etymology doubtless Dr. *Watts* calls the River *Severn* ANGRY:

The ANGRY *Severn* swells and roars,
And lifts our Thoughts to GOD.

Hor. Lyricæ.

quite overflow their Banks, and will not be contained within any Bounds of Justice, Gratitude, Love or Relation. They carry along with them Mire and Mud, Froth, and the Spoils of those they have passed by, and been conversant with. Such Persons may be dreaded for a Time; and if the Tyrant, the Man of Violence, is armed with any Degree of Power, every uneasy Passion may be raised in the Breasts of his Dependants; but will this always continue? No. *Yet a little while and he shall not be; yea, thou shalt seek him diligently and he shall not be* *. Then,

Wait on the Lord, ye Sons of Men,
Nor fear when Tyrants frown;
Ye shall confess their Pride was vain,
When Justice casts them down.

A FEW in Life (*the Lord make his People a hundred Times so many more than they be* †) are like the River *Thames* ‡, which is gentle and spacious, propitious to the adjoining Meadows, the Medium of communicating Blessings both backward

* Psalm xxxvii. 10 † 1 Chron. xxi. 3.

‡ The *Thamesis*, from whence our *Thames* immediately is derived, is undoubtedly the *British* Word *Tavis*, which signifies a gentle Stream. In that ancient Language the learned are agreed, that *V* is often turned into *M*. Britan. Antiq. et Nov. p. 116.

Probably it was with an Eye to this Derivation of the Word *Thames*, that Sir *John Denham* thus describes it,

Though deep, yet clear; though gentle, yet not dull;
Strong without Rage; without o'erflowing full,

ward and forward from its Source to its Exit, and is every Way desirable. How many pleasing Prospects and inviting Landshapes does this celebrated River furnish? And how delightful to converse with the Man, who is equally benign and amiable in his Disposition, who is obliging to all within the compass of his Acquaintance, who smiles, not with an insidious Flattery, but a true Benevolence upon every Individual of the human Species, who is pious towards God, just in all his commercial Dealings, merciful to the miserable, ardent to answer the End of his Being, ambitiously diligent to honour his Creator and Redeemer, and who rejoices to be Eyes to the Blind, Feet to the Lame, and any Way serviceable either to the temporal or the never-dying Interests of his Fellow-creatures?

As the bleating Flocks, the lowing Herd, and neighing Steed, in their fat Pastures do with their several Accents proclaim the fertilizing Beneficence of the winding Stream, so many Consciences, and perhaps many Tongues, bear a joint Testimony to the Praise of the good Man. How many Towns and Cities have felt the kindly Influence of a good Magistrate? Vice has been suppress'd, and Violence no more heard of in their Streets; the Fatherless and Widow have been tenderly protected from the Arm of tyrannical Power, which otherwise would have crush'd them; the Poor and Aged upheld and fed; and timorous Virtue encouraged and strengthened!

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How happy have some Neighbourhoods found themselves in the Presence and Labours of a faithful, zealous Minister? The glad Tidings he hath proclaimed from the Gospel, have been Music in their Ears! the sacred Sound hath thrill'd thro' every internal Power, and, Divine victorious Grace accompanying it, the most salutary Effects have been produced. Such a Ministry is an extensive Blessing to all who know how to improve it, and inexpressibly welcome to all who have seen the Evil of Sin and are press'd with a Sense of their Danger from the Wrath of God and the Flames of Hell. *Beautiful on the Mountains are the Feet of such Messengers* *. Their pious People could wish their Ministers Lives were, like the Gospel they preach, even *everlasting* †. But, as now they are publishing, so they *must*, ere long, *finish their Testimony* ‡. They are passing towards their God, their Home, their Reward. They are lost indeed as *Rivers*: They no more after Death dispense the Doctrines of Salvation, but are swallowed up in the Admiration of that Grace, in the Perfection of that Holiness, and the Adoration of that JESUS they before preached, leaving behind them the Savour of those Truths which they had inculcated, and an Example of that divine Conversation, which they had ardently recommended to others.

MAY you and I, dear Sir, be of this superior Character! some Streams fill a larger Channel;

* Isaiah lii. 7. † Rev. xiv. 6. ‡ Rev. xi. 7.



nel; but may it be our Concern to spread Knowledge, Virtue, and Religion, according to our respective Capacities, and, as is observable of some Rivers entering the Sea, may we, in our Approach to Eternity, widen in our Views of Faith and Usefulness to others, deepen in Humility, and, if it be the Will of our Heavenly Father, steal into the Bosom of Blessedness, as Streams gliding into the Ocean, without any Obstruction from weeping Friends and inward Fears.

My Soul aspires to see thy Face,
 Tho' Life should for the Vision pay;
 So Rivers run to meet the Sea,
 And lose their Name in their Embrace.

IN the Prospect of that World, where all our Tears shall be wiped away, and all our Wishes more than compleated, I lay my Pen aside for the present, and remain, Good Sir, your inviolably faithful Servant, &c.

L E T.



LETTER II.

On the OCEAN.

WORTHY SIR,

I DARE not be so vain as to indulge the Imagination that what I transmitted to you a few Posts ago, had half the Merit in it that your Approbation would indicate; but as you are pleas'd to desire I would proceed, upon an Apprehension that I had not finish'd my Contemplations on the Ocean, I now resume the Subject.

WHEN I had recalled my Eye from *Heaven*, whither my Thoughts had insensibly carried it, and had directed my Face towards the Sea, I saw the *Tide* coming in; and I must needs say that it brought in a *Flow of Wonders* with it. I thought with myself, were *those who go down to the Sea and do Business on the great Waters**, to view no other Wonders there, it were enough to entertain an inquisitive Mind, and give Instruction to a Soul, in the least susceptible of Divine Improvement. How the Tides are produced, let Philosophers tell; let such account for them as well as they can by the Laws of Gravitation and the attractive Influence of the Moon:

* Psalm cvii. 23.

Moon*: But even then they must own that all is by the Appointment of our Heavenly Father, who is the Lord of universal Nature, gives it all its Laws, and governs his own Works by them. How exactly periodical are the Fluxes and Reflexes of the Tides! When the proper Hour, and Minute of that Hour comes, how do the Waters crowd, as Servants coming immediately

* 'Tis thine, bright *Cynthia*, to dispense
Those Laws the Floods obey;
The hoary Deep, (untract'd Immense!)
Obedient, owns thy Sway.

The Theory of Tides is wonderful; and as all must acknowledge the Influence of the Moon in producing them, so probably it must arise from a mutual Gravitation between the Moon and the Terrestrial Globe: Now if the Moon gravitates towards the Globe, the Globe is attracted, and the fluid Part, the Ocean, is by this Means propell'd from the Equator towards the Poles. When the Moon is in our Meridian it is *high Water* with us; when the Moon gets, twelve Hours after, into the same Meridian in the other Hemisphere, it is high Water again. When it has flow'd as far as it can, by Virtue of such an Impression, after about a quarter or half an Hour's stay, it gently returns, to preserve the Equilibrium of Nature. All this proceeds regularly in the Space of 12 Hours and 24 Minutes; but Spring-Tides at full and change, 'tis well known, are much larger than the Neap-Tides; and those about the Vernal and Autumnal Equinoxes sometimes surprisingly full. In the Body of the Sea or main Ocean, its apprehended, the perpendicular Rise at the Season of flowing is but small, not above a Foot or two; but in restrained Channels very great; on the Coast of *Cornwall*, in the Chops of the *British Channel*, near *St. Michael's Mount*, between 80 and 90 Foot.

diately at the Call of their Master, eager to perform their Maker's Will! and how do they resent it, even foam as with Anger, if repell'd! Let such a Scene teach me *Readiness* and *Resolution* in Matters of Duty; does GOD call; let me open an obedient Ear, and say, "*Speak, Lord, for thy Servant beareth* †;" let me never linger in beginning, nor loiter in prosecuting my Lord's Work ‡. Let me every Day advert to this argumentative Thought, "What have I Understanding, Time, Strength, or any other Talents for, but to employ for God?" Shall *obedient Nature*, as it were, *run* when called, and shall I either absolutely refuse, or act unwillingly? No, my Soul, bestir thyself, shake off thy Sloth; let all thine Activity be awake on every Divine Summons; consult not with Flesh and Blood; if they oppose with their impertinent Babble, be deaf to their Pleas, put on Resolution, exercise an holy Zeal, and persevere 'till the Will of God be fulfilled.

WHO would have thought of such a Thing as the Tide, but the Divine Wisdom? and what could have produced it besides the Divine Power? and yet how necessary is it to the Inhabitants of our Globe? And here I may say with the *Psalmist*, *Let the Sea roar* forth its Praises, and *the Fields rejoice**, for without such a constant Motion neither could be what they are.

If

† 1 Sam. iii. 9.

‡ *Ingrederet ut proficiat*. The Motto on the Entrance to the Library of St. Paul's School.

* Psalm xcvi. 11, 12.

If that vast Collection of Waters should stagnate, how soon would they putrify? the Consequence of this would be the entire Destruction of the Finny and Scaly Nations, and their putrid Carcases must soon become poisonous to the whole Mass of Air; the Atmosphere being thoroughly infected, our Globe must be depopulated, and could be no longer tenantable. Let me from hence learn to be employing myself suitably: Without Business I cannot be comfortable to myself any more than useful to my Fellow-creatures. Indolence and Inactivity of Body corrupt the Animal Juices, but Labour and Exercise purge them; the best Method this, to promote Digestion, carry on the various Secretions, give Strength to the Solids, invigorate the natural Spirits, and hereby preserve that *Equilibrium* which we call *Health*. The Comfort of Life, I apprehend, is promoted still more by a suitable Degree of *mental* Exercise. To have nothing *to do*, nothing to *care for*, nothing to *hope for*, however it may be aimed at and thirsted after, and as view'd at a Distance may be esteemed a Felicity, is, I am satisfied, the Beginning of Wretchedness. And here I find I fall in with the Sentiments of Archbishop *Tillotson*, whose Observations I called to Mind, and whose Words I will now present you with.

“ GOD hath so contrived Things, that ordinarily the Pleasures of human Life do consist
 “ more in Hope than in Enjoyment; so that if
 “ a Man had *gained all the World*, one of the
 “ chief Pleasures of Life would be gone, be-
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“ cause there would be nothing more left to
 “ hope for in this World. For whatever Hap-
 “ piness Men may fancy to themselves in Things
 “ at a Distance, there is not a more melancholy
 “ Condition than to be at the Top of Great-
 “ ness, and to have nothing more left to aspire
 “ after; and he is a miserable Man whose De-
 “ sires are not satisfied, and yet whose Hopes
 “ are at an End; so that if a Man could do
 “ what *Alexander* thought he had done, conquer
 “ the whole World, when that Work was over
 “ he would in all Probability do just as *he* did,
 “ sit down and weep that there was nothing
 “ more for him to do.”

Fame is a Shade of Immortality,
 And in itself a Shadow: Soon as caught
 Contemn'd: it shrinks to nothing in our Grasp.
 And, “ Is this all?” cry'd *Cæsar*, at his Height
 Disgusted. ----- Disproportion vast between
 The Passion and the Purchase! he will sigh
 At such Success, and blush at his Renown. ----
 Possession why more tasteless than Pursuit?
 Why is a Wish far dearer than a Crown?
 That Wish accomplish'd, why the Grave of
 Bliss?

Young.

BUT oh! Sir, how much Advantage has the
 true and vigorous Christian even of those who
 wear Crowns, and sway Imperial Scepters, in
 this Respect? He not only *rejoices in Hope* of
 future Blessings, but in the Possession of present
 Good; and therefore the Apostle with the highest
 Reason

Reason says, *We who have believed* DO ENTER into Rest*. When he embraces his GOD and REDEEMER, his Soul is filled in all its Capacities; and well it may, for he is *filled with the Fulness of him who fills All in All*†. He feeds upon Honey, which, while it is inexpressibly sweet and incomparably satisfying, is by no Means cloying or surfeiting. He doth not want another *Jebovah*, as *Alexander* another World. His Language is, *I have all, and abound*‡. He triumphs *with a Joy unspeakable, and full of Glory*§. He surveys his Portion in all its Branches, and finds *that the Lines are fallen to him in pleasant Places, and that he has a goodly Heritage*¶. He needs no more, he desires no more; and while he is more acquainted with the Divine Perfections, and the Plenitude which is laid up in his Saviour and his Head, his Delight improves; and many Times, with some of our Ever-greens, he not only stands the Force of Winter-Frosts, and Northern Blasts, but with them flourishes more and blooms fairer than ever. And therefore, though the good Man sits down under a blasted Fig-tree, and fruitless Vine, he is so far from esteeming himself a Bankrupt, that *he rejoices in the Lord, and joys in the God of his Salvation*§. Reflexion, the Bane and Death of carnal Gratifications, gives fresh Spirits to the Good Christian. He blesses the

* Heb. iv. 3. † Eph. i. 23. ‡ Phil. iv. 18. § 1 Pet. i. 8. ¶ Psal. xiv. 6. § Hab. iii. 18.

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the Hour in which he was led by the Hand of Celestial Wisdom into the Paths of Religion. His Consolations are sweet, not only directly but upon the Rebound.

Here I could say,
 (And point the Place whereon I stood)
 Here I enjoy'd a Visit half a Day,
 From my descending God.
 I was regal'd with Heav'nly Fare,
 With Fruit and Manna from above;
 Divinely sweet the Blessings were,
 While mine *Emanuel* was there;
 And o'er my Head,
 The Conqu'ror spread
 The Banner of his Love.

Watts.

The Soul is a deep and wide extended Gulph; throw Riches, Honour, and sensitive Pleasures into it, it receives them, and says, *It is not enough*. Only an all-sufficient and everlasting God is an adequate and satisfying Portion to unbounded Wishes, and an immortal Nature.

BUT to return to the Tide.-----Not only does the Motion of the Waters subserve to their Wholesomeness, but how great the Convenience in point of Commerce, arising from the Tide? By this Means the Merchant is enabled to navigate his Ships up to the very *Gates*, nay, perhaps into the very *Center* of Cities; nay, almost

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into

into the very *Center* of Kingdoms*. He unloads into the Lap of the Inhabitants, and at the same Time easily takes in a Cargo of the Products and Manufactures of the Country from whence he sails. Here let me learn to adore the indulgent Kindness of the great God, and by this Pattern may I be taught Benevolence in every Form, to consult the Ease and Welfare of every one according to my Capacity, and contribute as freely and fully as may be, to their Felicity and Comfort.

ONE more Lesson I would learn from the Flux of the Tide, even Steadiness in my waiting upon God in the Appointments of his Worship. Ever may I walk with God, and be in his Fear all the Day long; but, however employ'd, let me *twice* every Day† draw nigh to God; *at least twice a Day* let me bow the Knee most solemnly, and pay my humble Adorations to him who liveth for ever and ever. And as the *Spring Tides* are peculiarly full, and as the Sea does then, as it were, bring a *larger Libation*,

* The Tide runs up the River *Thames* 80 Miles, viz. near to *Kingston* in *Surry*. The Tide in the *Delaware* River in *North-America*, runs near 200 Miles.

† Grant I may ever at the *Morning-Ray*,
Open with Pray'r the consecrated Day;
Tune thy great Praise, and bid my Soul arise,
And with the mounting Sun ascend the Skies:
And O! permit the Gloom of Solemn Night
To sacred Thought may forcibly invite,
When this World's shut, and awful Planets rise,
Call on our Minds, and raise them to the Skies.

Young's Last Day, p. 28.

tion, and pour it out at the Footstool and to the Praise of its Creator, let this put me in Mind of those peculiar and extraordinary Sacrifices of Prayer and Praise, Meditation, Hearing and Communicating, which, on the Lord's Day, and at Sacramental Seasons, I am to tender to the most High. May I then, like these peculiar Tides, have an extraordinary *Flow* of Spirits in the Exercise of holy Reverence, earnest Desire, and Divine Love.

FROM the vast Extent of these liquid Plains, ten thousand Times beyond the Reach of my Eye, I may infer they were formed for some *great Purpose*; and that infinite Wisdom and Power, which joined in creating, collecting, arranging, and restraining these Waters, had some mighty End in View. Hereby a Communication is opened between the most distant Parts of the Globe*, and an Exchange is made of each other's Conveniencies, the Products and Manufactures of their respective Countries; hence the Philosopher collects Materials, as he views the *various* Works of God, and sees more and more signal Impresses of the Deity, while the Peculiarities of every Country meet in his *Museum*: Yea, the Ocean itself was design'd, doubtless, to be a continual Monument of the stupendous Power of *Jehovah*. Now should the *Idiot* tell us, that the Sea was made only to waft his *Bladders*, or the *Child* that it was only to furnish

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* Thus vastly distant Lands acquainted grow,
And, mutually, commercial Aids bestow. *Brown*.

furnish him with a Variety of shining *Shells* upon the Shore*, how should we pity their Thoughtlessness, instruct their Ignorance, and, if we had any Hope that Persons so devoid of Understanding were capable of receiving them, what a Variety of Evidences would crowd in upon our Minds, while we opened the Nature of Wisdom, infer'd the Greatness of the *Design* of the Operator from the Grandeur of the Work, and argued that there must be a Proportion between the Expence and Intention, and that peculiar Contrivance and the Exertion of wondrous Power must conclude some extraordinary Use as the Result of all.

THIS is a Point that all Men of Reason are agreed in; and yet if we change the Scene a little from the grand Ocean to Man himself, his various Powers and his every Day's Conduct, how deficient shall we find the Wisdom of this World's *reputed* WISE? One would imagine, by the Conduct of the most, that the Sun was lighted up in the Heavens, and Reason, that nobler illumination, in the Mind of Man, only that

* As well may the minutest EMMET say,
 That *Caucasus* was rais'd to pave his Way;
 The Snail, that *Lebanon's* extended Wood
 Was destin'd only for his Walk and Food.
 The vilest Cockle, gaping on the Coast,
 That rounds the ample Seas as well may boast,
 The craggy Rock projects above the Sky,
 That he in Safety at its Foot may lie;
 And the whole Ocean's confluent Waters swell,
 Only to quench his Thirst, or move and blanch
 his Shell ——— Prior.

that he might eat and drink more luxuriously by them, that the *Inspiration of the Almighty** was only to teach him where to find the Diamond in its rocky Recess, or divide the beloved Particles of white and yellow Ore from the Rubbish in which they were before buried; Treasures which can please his Fancy but for a short Season, and then will be as useless to him, as the withered Leaves of the Autumn, or the falling blasted Blossoms of the Spring, which none regard. Who but a Child would imagine that the lighter Ocean, that of the Air, and the whole of our Atmosphere, was made only to waft his shining Bubbles? And yet, my Friend, I can tell you of a Generation of Creatures, who are endow'd with Souls, rational and immortal, capable of conversing with Angels, nay, with God himself, of contemplating his Perfections, adoring his Majesty, ensuring his Friendship, and enjoying his Smiles, yea, who must necessarily be blessed or miserable through a never ending Duration, who are ever busying themselves for the Support of a Body, loading themselves with thick Clay, digging into the Caverns of the Earth, and are swallowed up with Concerns which very soon will be no more to them, than Events which were transacted before the Flood.

If not so frequent, would it not be strange?

That 'tis so frequent, this is stranger still.

Young.

Were it not that Mankind measures Wisdom by a false Rule, and that such Persons are able to

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outvote

* Job. xxxii. 8.

outvote by their vast Numbers the divinely Wise, and are so far infatuated, that they would turn them into a *Bedlam*, though they are rather in Want themselves of so charitable a Provision, how absurd and preposterous a Thing must it soon appear, for GOD to cloath us with such *Scarlet* only to feed more pompously an hungry Brute, and furnish us with such rais'd Capacities, merely to pick Idiot's Straws! Excuse me, dear Sir, that I have from this View of the Ocean launch'd out so far in these Observations. I shall finish them with those Lines in the *Night Thoughts* which are so suitable to the Point, and always very striking to me.

And is it in the Flight of Threescore Years,
To push Eternity from human Thought,
And smother Souls immortal in the Dust?
A Soul immortal, spending all its Fires,
Wasting her Strength in strenuous Idleness,
Thrown into Tumult, raptur'd or alarm'd,
At aught this Scene can threaten or indulge,
Resembles *Ocean* into Tempest wrought,
To waft a Feather or to drown a Fly.

THE Saltness of the Sea-water was a Property that I could not overlook. Whence it proceeds, I don't pretend to determine. It was impossible for me to dive to the Bottom of the Ocean, to satisfy myself and all the Tribe of Natural Philosophers, whether there are Mountains of Salt or not; but I soon saw that it was a very wise, kind, and almost necessary Appointment

ment of him who formed the Sea, for *bereby*, as well as by *Motion*, this grand Fluid is kept from fatal Putrefactions. And Christians are to be to the moral World what the Saltness is to the Ocean. "*Ye are the Salt of the Earth* *." A sad, unfavoury World it is that they live in, even now; but O! how much worse would it be, if these few Handsful of Salt were taken away? The Lord impart to you and me more of a savoury Spirit, which shall manifest itself in holy Zeal, and Christian Affection, with all Meekness of Wisdom. *May our Speech be † alway with Grace, season'd with Salt! let no Communication proceed out of our Mouth, but that which is good to the Use of edifying, that it may minister Grace to the Hearers †.* Foolish talking and jesting is no way becoming the Disciples of *Jesus*. Let us labour by this Power of Speech, guided by a pious holy Heart, to comfort the feeble-minded, animate discouraged Virtue, stop the Tide of unruly Vice, be Eyes to be Blind by our Instruction, and guide their Feet into the Way of Peace. Let Gravity and Sweetness, Prudence and Affection, the Fear of the Lord, and the Law of Kindness, direct our Conversation; and Let our Discourse be the Communication of good Things out of the good Treasure of our Hearts.

AND, taking *Salt* to be an Emblem of Wisdom, let the great Men of the World be prompted to seek after it; did it but mingle with their

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Honours

* Matt. v. 13.

† Col. iv. 6.

‡ Eph. iv. 29.

Honours and Estates, how much more useful would it render them! While some, therefore, are measuring Felicity by the Size of an Estate, and the Extent or Number of Lordships, and others, with more Propriety, say, *the Merchandize of Wisdom is better than the Merchandize of Silver, and the Gain thereof than fine Gold**; let us join both together, and say, *Wisdom is good with an Inheritance†*.

By the Mixture of so much Salt in the Sea-water, Vessels of larger Burthen are buoyed up, as the Consistence of the Fluid is hereby made stronger. I have been told the Difference is so great, that Ships have actually sunk upon sailing up Fresh-water Rivers, after they have traversed the mighty Deep in Safety. But the ship-wreck'd Mariner can with the greatest Pleasure and Gratitude assure you how kind the Appointment is, as the Sea-water, saturated with Salt, bears him up, and enables him to swim with the greater Ease, and for a longer Season, till he arrive at the welcome Shore.

FROM these few wondrous Properties of the Ocean, let me touch a little upon the Creatures that possess it. But what Eye can behold, what Pencil describe, or what Words enumerate, all the Inhabitants of the liquid World? Or, if I may ask the Question poetically, in better Language than my own,

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* Prov. iii. 14.

† Eccl. vii. 11.

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What Muse the strange Inhabitants shall tell,
That in the watry World secluded dwell?
What undiscover'd Climes and hidden Coasts,
Conceal their new unnam'd, unnumber'd Hosts.

Mr. Browne's excellent Poem on the
Universe, p. 24.

O THE surprizing Variety, Size, and Shape!
some so small as to escape our Notice; some so
large as scarce to be measured *. Some are for
Food, others for Physic; and some supply our
Lamps with Oil, or serve more ignoble, tho'
necessary, Uses. How different a Turn must
the whole of their Bodies have to ours †?

How enormous the Size of many, and how
frightful their Appearance? See a great Num-
ber of well-fed *Porpuses* rolling and tumbling in
the Water as if a Storm was approaching!
'The lordly *Shark*! how surprizing his Length!
how horrible to behold, when he opens his migh-
ty Jaws, and discovers all the Ranges of his de-
structive Fangs ‡. But especially see yonder *Le-*

C 5

viathan

* From the small Fry that glide on *Jordan's* Stream
Unmark'd, a Multitude without a Name,
To that *Leviathan*, who o'er the Seas
Immense rolls onward his impetuous Ways,
And mocks the Wind, and in the Tempest plays. }
Prior's King Solomon.

† Naturalists observe a world of Wisdom and De-
sign in the Structure of *Fishes* and their Conformation
to the Element they were design'd to reside in. Some-
thing in this Way may be touch'd upon hereafter.

‡ His Jaws horrific, arm'd with threefold Fate,

Here

viathan who is wantonly at play upon the Mountain-billows! Others are but a Pigmy-race, when compared with him. If I may compute his Food from his Bulk, I am ready to ask, where can he find Provision to supply his Demands? Must he not be like some great Warrior on our Element, who depopulates wherever he comes? Shall I call him the delegated Sovereign of the Deep? Must not whole Hosts fly before him, or go down quick into Death*? Must he not often, like a royal Army, decamp, and shift the Place of his Abode, to provide his necessary Food? With what a surprising Alertness does he shoot thro' the Waves? what Rivers does he spout from his Nostrils? how dangerous even for Vessels of Burden to be near him? how prodigious his Strength? and what majestic Terror appears in all his Form?

AND yet he is not altogether safe from Attacks. *He may now laugh at the Shaking of the Spear, and esteem Iron as Straw, and Brass as rotten Wood*†; but Destructions await him from various Quarters, not only from the Hands of Men

Here dwells the direful Shark. One Death involves Tyrants and Slaves; when strait the mangled Limbs Crashing at once, he dies the purple Seas With Gore, and riots in the vengeful Meal.

Thomson's Summer, p. 97.

* I would not be understood to assert that the Whale is carnivorous, or a Fish of Prey; for tho' some assert it, I believe more are inclin'd to think that he chiefly feeds upon those Vegetables with which the Bottom of the Sea is much covered.

† Job xli. 27—29.

Men but from the Inhabitants of those Watry Regions, where he seems to reign uncontrollable and supreme over all. *Naturalists* assure us that the *Sword-Fish* hath an inbred Enmity to the Whale, and terribly shews his Hatred and Power against him, by thrusting his armed Snout into his Bowels: And I am credibly inform'd that there is another Fish, called the *Tresher*, that fastens upon his Back, and lashes him upon his broad Sides; and that these two Fishes, tho' small in Comparison of his enormous Bulk, will entirely demolish him. Behold the Monster bleeding, struggling, gasping, foaming, and dying in extreme Torment. The Waves are dyed with Blood; and his agonizing Convulsions work up the Ocean into a kind of Tempest. He may roar and groan, but it is but the roar of impotent Fury, and the Groan of Death, and they will soon end in Silence. O let all who act the Tyrant on dry Land, who strengthen themselves in Wickedness, who not only oppress, but take a wanton impious Pleasure in Oppression, view themselves in this Glass, boast not of their Power, and learn Humility and Wisdom. *O trust not in Oppression, and become not vain in Robbery* *. Much Power may be entrusted to you in private or publick Life. Servants may wait upon your Nod, Princes may court your Favour, and Armies and Nations may rise at your Command. Perhaps you are laying waste Cities and Provinces. Fear may

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go before you, and Countries may tremble at your Name. Life or Death may wait upon the Word of your Lips, or the Motion of your Brow. But, oh! think how short-lived your Power may be, and use it with Moderation and Justice, as the Representative of him who put this Power into your Possession, will call you to an Account for so great a Talent, and bids you employ it for his Glory, and the Good of your Fellow-Creatures. You may vaunt yourself in your Strength, and spread Distress and Destruction around you, but an invisible Sword may now be pointed to your Bosom, and the Omnipotent Arm that manages it, may be ready to give the fatal Blow. How often does the Slave trample upon the Dust of his cruel Task-Master! How soon is that Hand stiff and motionless in Death, that was but lately crushing the Neck of its Prisoners with an Iron Yoke. The Tyrant who has subdued Kingdoms, led their Princes in Chains, and frequently triumph'd at the Head of Armies, has at last been surprized, in an unexpected Hour, by an Handful of Men, and taken captive himself; or has even had his Blood spilt by the Hands of one of the meanest of his People. The Histories of most Countries furnish us with Examples of this Kind. Some when they were struck down by Heaven, in the Career of their tyrannical Oppression, have acknowledged the righteous Hand of the most High; and others have, in Sounds more dreadful than those of the expiring Whale, roared out their Blasphemies with their dying Breath.

THESE

THESE Creatures, tho' *mute to a Proverb*, methinks, in Reason's Ear have a mighty Voice, proclaiming the Power and Majesty of GOD: though so *many*, they are all under his Eye, and fed from his Hand: tho' so *mighty*, they are under his Controul, and go upon his Errands. How wonderful was that Event, when the Lord of all prepared a *Fish* to swallow up the fugitive Prophet? how strange the Serjeant? how uncommon the Prison where he was confin'd? and how miraculous his Preservation in that close Recess of Suffocation and Heat? and how readily obedient is the mighty Jailer to give the Prophet a Release, when the Lord speaks the Word?

ANOTHER Fish, you know, was sent upon another Message, even to deliver a Piece of Money to *Peter*. Let no one say, that, tho' it is uncommon to find Silver in the Mouth of a Fish, it was casual, for our Lord foretold it, and bid *Peter* cast an Hook for this End. And to make the thing the more remarkable, what he found there was the very Piece he wanted*. How strange farther, that our Lord had not sufficient to pay the Tribute-money now required?

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* Matt. xvii. 24 and 27. Whether this was a civil or a sacred Tax, is not the Thing to be considered; what the *Gatherers* enquired concerning was, the (*Διδραχμα*) the *two Drams* of Silver, about 15 Pence Sterling, which answered nearly to half a Shekel Jewish Money. The particular Piece of Money mentioned by our Lord, as what *Peter* should find, is (*στατηρ*) a *Stater*, which answered to 4 Drams, or a Jewish Shekel, or Half a Crown English.

The poorer he appeared, the dearer he should be to us! He was rich, for he was the Lord of all, and yet for our Sakes he became poor, that we thro' his Poverty might be made rich. But thro' this Veil of Poverty shines forth his Divinity and Sovereignty; and hereby was demonstrated the predicted Authority of *Jesus* over this Branch of the Creation, *the Fish of the Sea** But, O my Soul, how undoubted will be the Evidence of his universal Dominion over the Ocean, and all its Contents, at the last and great Day? All Nature shall hear his Voice. every Grave shall give up its Dead; they who lie entombed in the Bowels of the Sea-monsters, and are incorporated with their very Substance, even these shall be brought to Light, for it is said expressly, "*The Sea gave up the Dead that were in it*†." And indeed no Cavern is so dark, no Abyfs so deep, no Enclosure so strong, but Omniscience can penetrate it, and Omnipotence can burst it asunder.

DID I not think, dear Sir, that I should exhaust your Patience, I would mention one Remark more than my contemplating Thoughts were taken up with, and that is the *Confusion* which *appear'd* to a distant Eye, where there was the greatest *Regularity really*, and even much admired by those that were near. From the Shore then I saw floating Vessels of various *Names, Shapes, and Sizes*, from the first Rate Man

* Psalm viii. 4—8, compared with Heb. ii. 6—9.
† Rev. xx. 13.

Man of War to the giddy Cockboat, all borne up by the same Ocean, and all directed by their respective Pilots, under the Force of their own Sails or Oars.

LET me hence be cautious how I arraign the Dealings of Providence, and charge Confusion upon infinite Wisdom in the Management of Affairs in our World. Am I sensible that in the Scene before me Appearance does not answer to Reality, let me remember I am no more in a proper Position to judge of the Divine Administration. Shall the ignorant Slave who knows not his Letters, or who learned them but Yesterday, call the learned Philosopher to his Bar? Or shall the foolish School-boy censure the Affairs of State as a Series of Blunders? Because every Spot is not a level Champaigne, or a Bed of Flowers, or because every Tree has not the Clusters of the Vine, or the Verdure of the Olive; or because all are not Rich, or Wise, or Good, shall we charge God foolishly, and think lightly of his Almighty Power, and Providential Operations? Shall the Painter be blamed because Gold and Vermilion don't fill up the whole Canvas? May not dark Shades, and darker Grounds, illustrate the Work and Skill of the Artist, and present a more striking Beauty to the Eye? How unfit am I to pronounce upon Providence when I see so small a Part of its Design reveal'd? If I saw a Piece of fine Historical Tapestry in Folds and Plaits, I should feel neither Admiration nor Pleasure at the Sight;
but

but if this Product of the Persian Loom was expanded and displayed before me, how should I admire the Skill of the Contrivance, the lively and judiciously variegated Colours, the Beauty of the Execution, and the Harmony of the Whole; whereas before I saw the Head of a Man and the Legs of an Horse almost blended together; here half a beautiful Face, and there the dusky Arm of a Negroe. Fain would we have Virtue triumphant in an immutable Prosperity, not considering that the Soldier must fight and overcome, and at last be crowned. We don't arraign the Goldsmith for casting his precious Metal into the Fire, and yet we complain and are discouraged *when the Lord tries the Righteous*. We lament over a *Joseph* when the pious dutiful Stripling is exiled from his Father's Arms and Family; when he is sent into a strange Land, and delivered into Slavery, we are ready to ask where is the Lord that judges in the Earth, when the Crime, which he shunned out of an holy regard to the all-seeing Eye of Heaven, is what is charged upon him here on Earth, drives him from the Favour of his Master, and locks him up in a Prison; but, behold, all this is ordained by Providence to be the Passage to the Splendors of the Court, to be his noble Preparative to combat with the Temptations, and to discharge the Services of an exalted Station, and to save his Father and his Family, and even Nations themselves, from perishing in Famine. Well, O my Soul, leave the Management of the Universe to him, whose Province it

is.

is. Remember, that Duty, not Government, is thine. Thou art a poor Menial Servant in the Family ; Jehovah is the Lord of all. How unfit am I to exalt myself to the Tribunal, and sit in Judgment upon my Maker's Transactions, when I know not the Springs of them, nay, and can see but a very small Part of his vast and stupendous Scheme. This I believe ; and here may nothing arise to shake my Confidence, that, though Clouds and Darknes are round about the Almighty's Throne, yet that he is wise in his Councils, excellent in working, righteous in all his Ways, and Holy in all his Works ; that he is good to *Israel*, that he is ever mindful of his Covenant, that he is secretly, though, it may be to us, strangely fulfilling his Promises, and gradually refining the Hearts of his People, and preparing them for Glory. I believe that the Day is coming when all the Darknes of Providence shall be dispersed, when every intricate Maze shall be unfolded, when every seeming Contradiction shall be harmonized, and when the Glories of the Divine Perfections, and particularly the Love of God towards his People, shall be evidently seen, and be eternally adorable in all. May I but reach the Regions of celestial Day, the Height of *Zion*, then shall I have *Melancthon's* Wish, who comforted himself, upon his Death-bed, with this Thought, among many other blessed Consequences of dying, *that he should learn all those admirable Mysteries which he could not understand in this World.* Again, when I took a further View of this Ma-

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fine Scene, I thought with myself, that it is no Wonder the Worlds, the numberless Worlds, round about me travelling their respective Journeys thro' trackless Space, and in their various Distances from me and one another, appear all in Confusion, when their Distances are so much greater. But O what a Sight will the disembodied Saint have of these Works of Creation? They are now *sought out by many that have Pleasure in them**; and the devout Philosopher sees that *now* which causes him with Wonder and Praise to cry out, "Among the Gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord, neither are there any Works like unto thy Works. Thou art great, and dost wondrous Things; thou art God alone†." But he expects that one noble Part of his Heaven will be to explore with enlightened Eyes and enlarged Prospect, the Glories of those Orbs which are round about him. The Eye of the Soul may then at once attend the Comets, which belong to our System, in their prodigious Journey through the boundless Space. It may be no strange Thing to it, tho' it may to us now, how it is that the *Sun's* Fire is fed for so many thousand Years without any visible Fewel; what is the Nature of every Planet, what their Soil, their Atmospheres, their Inhabitants; how it is that some are not burnt to a Cinder, and others, by Reason of their Distance from the central Sun, are not condemned to an everlasting Night of Darkness, and bound up by the Frost of a never-ceasing Winter.

THE

* Psalm cxi. 2.

† Psalm lxxxvi. 8 and 10.

THE disembodied Saint, with strengthened Eyes, may behold the various Situations of the fix'd Stars with their revolving Planets, and measure their Distances and Dimensions by an unerring Line, though, while in this World the most daring Astronomer durst not so much as form a Guess how remotely they might be placed from each other, or our Earth.

From some superior Point (where, who can tell?
Suffice it, 'tis a Point where Saints reside)
How shall the Stranger-man's illumin'd Eye,
In the vast *Ocean* of unbounded Space,
Behold an Infinite of floating Worlds
Divide the chrystal Waves of *Æther* pure,
In endless Voyage without Port; the *least*
Of these disseminated Orbs, how *great*?
Great as they are, what Numbers these surpass
Huge as Leviathan to that small Race,
Those twinkling Multitudes of little Life,
He swallows unperceived! *Stupendous* these!
Yet what are these *stupendous* to the Whole?

Young.

GIVE me leave to finish, while you feel the
Relish of these fine Lines, with all Sincerity,
subscribing myself

Yours, &c.



LETTER III.

On the OCEAN.

DEAREST SIR,

THE friendly Regards you have express'd to my cursory Reflections on the Ocean, encourage me to proceed. And as you give me Liberty to communicate any Thing else that may occur, so my Affairs permit me to sit down, and talk to my Friend this Way. Since I wrote last, my Curiosity has been gratified, and I hope my Heart really bettered, as I have had many pleasing Opportunities of surveying the Fishermen at their Employments, and the Fruit of their Labour, in the Multitude and various Structure of the Fish they caught. And if you, Sir, will imagine you see me retired to the Dwelling of one of these People, with many of the Spoils of the Ocean round about me, you will be led to indulge me so far as to give a Scope to my Contemplations on this Head: My Thoughts have been filling for this Day or two, while I have been engaged in this new Scene; give me Leave to pour them out before you, that I may be refresh'd; and if I can't entertain you with any Thing new, yet you will me permit to feed myself on a choicer Dish than was ever taken thence.

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WHO would imagine that there should be such Creatures as *Fishes*, if he did not see them? Had the Philosopher been acquainted only with those Creatures which tread upon the Ground, and breathe in the same Manner that terrestrial Animals do, and had it been insinuated to him, that there was a Sort of Creature in the Sea so formed, as to live, move, be healthy and Sprightly, procreate their Species, and perform every animal Function with Ease and Pleasure; would he not have rejected the Notion as a philosophical Dream? and, arguing from the Effects which an Immersion for a considerable Season under the Water has upon us, would he not pronounce the Thing impossible? and yet so it is, that by a peculiar Construction of the Organs of Inspiration at their Gills, the Air is taken in, while the Water is excluded. And as every Creature of the brutal Kind comes into the World with a Sort of Cloathing, the Author of Nature has in this Respect, provided for this Part of his great Family, and adapted it to their peculiar Situation. Some are, as it were, cloathed in Buff, while dress'd in a thick outward Skin; and others are covered with a Coat of Mail. Thus the Crab, Lobster, Oyster, and all the testaceous Sort appear in a massy Armour, which, though it is not designed for much Motion, yet secures them, and Providence brings them their Food: Others have a still lighter and more portable Coat, this the scaly Sort bear about with them; this, as an upper Garment, they seem to have Power of opening
and

and shutting, according to the Season and other Circumstances. The Roots of these Scales are inserted in a fatty Substance, which, with an Oilyness besmearing the Outside, helps to defend them from that Cold which many Times prevails to an Extremity in their native Regions.

BUT to a Philosopher who had never seen a *Fish*, it would be a great Objection against such Existencies, that the same Sort of Eyes would not suit them that other Creatures have, as the Medium of Vision is different, and the Refractions of the Rays of Light peculiar, as passing from the rare to the more dense Element. Here he will find, that Providence, always wise, has taken peculiar Care. This Care is discernable and admirable in the *Frog, Birds, Spiders, Moles*, who have all of them Eyes different from us, and each other, according to their Places of Residence and Method of Subsistence; and the same Provision is worthy our Regards in the *Fish*, for their Organs are so constructed, as to enable them to correspond to all the Convergencies and Divergencies of Rays, which the Variations and Wavings of the watry Medium, and the Refractions thereof may occasion*. So that

* Let the inquisitive Reader, if he would receive peculiar Satisfaction upon this Head, consult the Religious Philosoph. b. 2. p. 670. where he shews That Fishes wanting the first Convergence which we have from our aqueous Humour, the Rays of Light must necessarily over-shoot themselves, and not be able to meet collectively in the Bottom of the Eye.

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that we may say as *Job* *, *Ask now the Beasts, and they shall teach thee ----- and the Fish of the Sea, shall declare unto thee, who knoweth not in all these that the Hand of the Lord hath wrought this?*

THERE is a Wonder in the Motion of the Fish, I mean especially now the round Sort, which the more it is attended to, appears the more surprising; whether at one Time I view them shooting forward as an Arrow from the String, or at other Times easily rising to the Surface, and upon every Surprise darting as quick to the Bottom; now turning to the right, then to the left, and all this with an Agility which the most accomplish'd Person among us cannot imitate. Their progressive Motion is owing partly to the Shape, but chiefly to the soft, flexible, and elastic Muscles of the *Tail* †.

What

Now, in order to remedy this, as they could not wear Spectacles, as our old People, Providence has cast the Chrystalline Humour of their Eyes in a rounder Form and of a smaller Circumference; thus, according to the Rules of Optics, there must be a larger Refraction in the converging Ray, and that is done now at once with them, which is done with us at twice.

* *Job* xii. 7, &c.

† One of Sir *Isaac Newton's* Laws of Motion, is, that Action and Reaction between Bodies are equal, and in contrary Directions. On this Principle it is that Fish swim; because when the Water is acted upon in any one Direction, it moves the Fish in a Direction just the contrary. Tho' some can't help thinking, that there is something of an innate Energy in the Creature, which is hard to be described.

What we call the *Fins*, tho' mistaken by some as if conducing to progressive Motion more than they do, subserve noble and necessary Purposes. If it were not for these little muscular Membranes from the Breast to right and left, the poor Creature would have no Steadiness at all, but would reel here and there, and perhaps turn upon its Back; but thus furnish'd, it diverts one Way or another, to provide its Food or avoid impending Danger; and while doing so, with what Dexterity will it drop one of its Fins, while the other is employed as the Waterman upon the *Thames*, when turning his Boat to or from Shore, will work one Oar, while the other is idle?

THE Rise and Fall of the Fish in the Water is still more wonderful: We all know that in every Fluid, whether Air or Water, every Body will sink or rise, according to its specific or comparative Gravity. Now I apprehend, that the Weight of the Fish, in its natural State, being greater than so much Water, it must necessarily sink, and could not possibly rise any more. To prevent this in the round Sort of Fish, the wise and Kind Creator has implanted an Air-bladder in the Belly of the Creature, which it has a Power, by the external Muscles, to contract or dilate at Pleasure, and so increase its specific Gravity to one Degree or another, and by this Means keep what Course it pleases, whether high or low. You know many have made the same Experiment that *Bellini* did; they have cut the

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the poor Creature open, and taken out this inflated Bladder, and the Consequence has been, that though it lived many Weeks, ~~that~~ it sunk to the Bottom, and was not able to mount at all. On the whole, who can forbear crying out on this, as on many Occasions, "*O Lord, how manifold are thy Works? in Wisdom hast thou made them all!*"* I could not forbear, on this Occasion, entreating, that a rational and divine Wisdom may be equally implanted in my Breast, that I may be fitted for every Occupation which my Sphere in Life calls for, and particularly may I be enabled to stretch myself in the Exercise of a holy Desire, and thus ascend upward.

THE *Fecundity* of the Fish claimed my Attention, as GOD hath hereby so wondrously provided for the Inhabitants of both Elements. The Fruitfulness of many Land Animals is remarkable; and yet what is this to the Multiplication of that Species of Creatures, which I am now dwelling upon? "Here is an Instance and Emblem of thy Liberality, O thou God of Providence! when thou didst pronounce thy Benediction on the Works of thine Hand, thou didst distinguish the Fish from the Rest, and put an Emphasis upon it; and while thou didst give a Commission to other Creatures to be fruitful and multiply, thou didst direct *the Water to bring forth* ABUNDANTLY *the moving Creature that bath Life* †." And O how

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* Psalm civ. 24. † Gen. i. 20.

great, how energetical is the Influence of this Blessing even to this Day! Indeed in the early Ages of the World, it was so taken Notice of, that it became proverbial in this Way to express a peculiar, a more than ordinary Increase of People; so that *Jacob* prays that *Ephraim* and *Manasseh* may multiply like *Fishes* *. From such an Increase, what Provision is made for Thousands? Tho' every Year produces a large Harvest, yet there is no Deficiency; the Destruction vast; the Multiplication more astonishing; the Survivors of the Species are abundantly sufficient to recruit, tho' the Fisheries are so many, and carried on annually with increasing Toil, Numbers and Art †.

BUT

* The Hebrew word is, I suppose, used only in this Place. Gen. xlviii. 16 יִשְׁבְּרִי but it apparently takes its Rise from the Root יָשַׁב, a Fish. *Fecundari more piscium, nam a Dag piscis, verbum formatum, ut Hebræi tradunt. Buxtorf. Vid. etiam Relig. Philos. v. ii. p. 674.*

† “ As great as the Number of *Cods* may be, that
 “ have been consumed by Man this Year, or devour-
 “ ed by other Fish, what remains of that Tribe is
 “ always sufficient to furnish the same Quantity a Year
 “ or two hence; and this is a Demonstration. When
 “ I went to view the Port of *Dieppe*, they brought
 “ us a very fine Cod; but much inferior to those we
 “ receive from the great Bank. I was curious to
 “ count the Eggs she contained; in order to which I
 “ took as many as weighed a Dram; and having three
 “ of us engaged to number them, and then weighed
 “ the whole, the aggregate Sums produced were nine
 “ Millions three Hundred and forty-four Eggs.”—
Speët. de la Nature, Vol. I. p. 231. A late Writer
 goes far beyond this, when he says, “ That in the
 “ Milt

BUT I told you that I had been conversant with the Fishermen attending their Occupation; and I was more than a little pleased with the various Methods taken according to what was designed. The cunning Contrivances at one Time! the laborious Diligence at another! what Fatigues are undergone? what Dangers passed thro' to attain the Point? Disappointment, tho' grievous, did not discourage; and they were not only Instant in Season, but sometimes out of Season. A proper Pattern, thought I, for the Ministers of the Gospel to imitate, especially as their Master employs them under the Character of *Fishermen*. When he gives them their Call and Commission, what does he say but this, "*I have made you Fishers of Men**." And to a benevolent Mind, to a Soul full of Divine Charity, how desirable an Employment! how pleasing a Character and important, as it is the most useful, to stop the wandering Sinner in his wild Career, to save him from the Jaws of the great Devourer, to convert him from the Error of his Way, and rescue him from eternal Death? Can any Undertaking be of such Moment? Fishers of Men! To this Character the eternal Son of GOD condescended when he became incarnate. Did he not *come to seek and save that*

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which

" Milt of a single Cod Fish, ten Times more living
 " Creatures are contain'd than the Inhabitants of
 " *Europe, Asia, Africa, and America*, taking it for
 " granted, that all Parts of the World are as well
 " peopled as *Holland*, which is far from being the
 " least." See Hymn to the Creator, p. 38. note 7.

* Matt. iv. 19.

*which was left**? His Ministers are Fishers of Men; and tho' their Office, being only instrumental, falls infinitely short of his, yet if it bears the least Analogy, the most distant Resemblance, if in any, even the lowest Sense at all, they may be said to *save themselves and them that hear them*†, I will and must *magnify their Office*‡. Tell me not then of the honourable and lucrative Offices of the great Men of the Earth; what are they, if weighed in the Balance of the Sanctuary, in Comparison with the Station and Business of a genuine Minister of the Gospel? the former may cast a dazzling Glare upon the Eye of the Beholder, the latter strikes the Mind with an excelling Glory. I think it my Duty to *pay Honour to whom Honour is due, and Fear to whom Fear*§. I reverence Magistrates, not merely as clothed with Ermin, but much more as adorned with Learning, Integrity and Wisdom; and yet, when I consider the excellent Nature of the *Soul*, and that the everlasting Interests thereof are infinitely more precious than Estates and Dignities derived from the Smiles of Mortals, I should not wonder if I saw the eloquent Orators of the Bar, cast away their Briefs to embrace the Bible||, yea, the most

* Luke xix. 10. † 1 Tim. iv. 16. ‡ Rom. xi. 13. § Rom. xiii. 8.

|| We have an eminent Instance of this in the last Age in *France*, in the Conduct of the learned *Monsieur Henry Marets*. He had been educated for the Bar, under his Uncle, a celebrated Advocate of the Parliament

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most grave and reverend of our Judges descend from their Bench of Judicature to ascend the Pulpit, and prefer the dispensing the Word of Salvation to the determining the weightiest Causes according to the municipal Laws of their Country; nay, I should not be amazed, if Princes themselves should lay aside their Scepters and Ensigns of Royalty, and become Preachers of the Gospel. In the Patriarchal Days, when the Streams of Wisdom being nearest to the Fountain were less muddied, the King and Priest were the same*. I know it would be a Sound

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very

ment of *Paris*; he actually began to plead, and, as the President *Belleur* himself told his Father, with great Success: notwithstanding which, he threw up his Profession and devoted himself to Divinity, and the Ministry of the Word of God. Vid. *Bayle's Dict.* Vol. VII. p. 425, where we have Part of a Latin Letter written to him by his Father, in a very elegant Style. And it appears, that such were his Abilities, that *Bayle* himself says, that he gained the Esteem of the World.

* Not only was this the Case of *Melchizedec*, Heb. vii. 1: but the Word *כהן* in the *Hebrew*, indiscriminately signifies the Monarch or Priest, as is well known to the Learned: And that the same Person was both King and Priest, among the ancient Greeks, appears from *Virgil*, who, speaking of *Anius*, King of *Delos*, says,

Rex Anius, Rex idem Hominum, Phœbique Sacerdos.

If we descend to the *Romans*, *Numa*, who instituted a great Number of sacred Services, performed many of them himself, as a Priest, and thus it was with the Kings at *Rome* as long as the Office continued. Upon the Expulsion of the Kings they still appointed one to represent him, even to perform the *Priestly*
Part

very peculiar to the Age we dwell in, as *the Wisdom from above* is so much excluded to make Way for that which is *earthly and sensual*, to talk of Monarchs sending forth their Exhortations (shall I call them their Sermons?) of a divine and spiritual Nature; and yet I could inform those whom the Thought would perhaps make merry, where they may find such a Prince, and he is not ashamed to prefix his Name to his Works. I don't mean now *Henry III.* preaching from the Pulpit at *Canterbury*, nor *Alfred the Great*, King of the *West Saxons*, who employed himself much this Way*; nor *Constantine*

Part of the *Royalty*. He was called, as Dr *Kennett* observes, *Rex Sacrorum*. And when the Imperial Authority was vested in *Julius Cæsar* and *Augustus*, they assumed among other Titles that of *Pontifex Maximus*, which was still continued, even down to the Emperor *Gratian*. "Yea, says *Chambers*, in this most Authors agree, that the Crown, which
 " now encircles only *Royal Temples*, originally was
 " rather a *Religious* than a *Civil Ornament*; one of
 " the *Pontificalia* than the *Regalia*; that it only became common to Kings, as the ancient *Kings* were
 " *Priests* as well as *Princes*; and that the modern
 " *Princes* are intituled to it in their *Ecclesiastical Capacity*, rather than their *Temporal*: yea, he adds
 " that Lawyers say, that the King of *England* is a mixed Person, a *Priest* as well as a *Prince*, and that
 " at his Coronation, he is anointed with Oil as the
 " *Priests* and *Kings* of *Israel* were, to intimate that
 " his Person is sacred."

* I take *Alfred* to be one of the greatest Princes and best Men that his Age produced: Though, by Reason of the Ignorance of the Times, he was 20 Years of Age before he learnt to read, yet afterwards he

*line the Great**, who thought it not beneath the Dignity of the Imperial Purple to preach and pray in the Christian Assemblies, but a still greater than these, even *Solomon*. In his most mature Age, when Judgment was most ripe, and Experience had strengthened it, he wrote a Book which he thus entitles, “ *The Words of the Preacher, the Son of David, King of Jerusalem †* :” and so far is he from being ashamed of the pious Character mingling with the Royal, that he repeats it, “ *I the Preacher was King over Israel in Jerusalem ‡* .” Bear with me then a little in (what the World will call) my Folly, and indeed bear with me §.

A Fisher of Men! Shall any be thought too laborious in such an Employment? can any be too anxious about the Success? can Ministers be blamed, if they cry aloud and spare not, if they lift up their Voice like a Trumpet? or rather, do not those who are faithful blame themselves, that their Zeal is so little, when the Occasion is so urgent? O may the Head of the Church, in whom are hid all Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge, make them all wise to win Souls; help them *to find out and employ acceptable Words*,

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as

he made such Proficiency, that, being a studious and pious Prince, he set apart eight hours in twenty four for Devotion, and the writing of some, and translating other Books of Religion for his Subjects Use.

* See the Appendix to Mr. *Baxter's* Life, Folio, P. 55.

† Eccl. i. 1. ‡ Eccl. v. 12. † § 2 Cor. xi. 1.

as that Royal Preacher did*; and may they never be weary in well-doing! Still let them be animated to proceed, *tho' they have toiled all the Night, and have taken almost nothing*†; and O may their Divine Master accompany their Labours with his own effectual Grace, and incline Souls to come in, that they may not fish as with angling Rods, taking now one, and then another, but *fish as with a Net, and gather as with a Drag*‡! How signally successful were some of our Forefathers in the Work of Conversion? as they excelled in Judgment, Affection, Integrity and Self-denial, the Lord wrought signally by them§. O for the Return of a departing Spirit!

BUT

* Eccl. xii. 10. † Luke. v. 5. ‡ Hab. i. 15.

§ 'Tis remarkable, in the Life of Mr. *Samuel Fairclough*, that he caught Multitudes at once (that is the Expression of his Son who wrote it) so that he left in his Diary the Names of some Hundreds, who had all expressly owned him to be their spiritual Father, and the Means of their first Conversion, and of their future Salvation, as they hoped.

In the Life of Mr. *Richard Blackerby* 'tis thus written, " His preaching was accompanied with such an Authority of the Divine Presence and Power of the Spirit, that Souls fell exceedingly under the Yoke of *Christ* by his Ministry; so that he has (being urged by some Reasons thereto) being constrained to acknowledge to some intimate Friends, (tho' far from boasting) that he had Reason to believe that God had made him a spiritual Father to two Thousand Souls." See *Clark's* last Volume of Lives.

BUT you will think it more than Time to shift the Scene. This I shall now do by directing your Eyes and my own more immediately to the Ocean, whence the important Subject had diverted them. While I had so many Opportunities of conversing with it, I saw it, if I may be allowed the expression, in all its Tempers, sometimes gentle as a Lamb, at other Times majestic as a Monarch, and anon terrible as a roaring Lion. Now I blessed the pleasing Situation of those, who, by its Neighbourhood, enjoyed so many Advantages in point of Commerce, and so much Delight in the varied Prospects agreeable in themselves, and gilded by the Sun-Beams obliquely or perpendicularly darting and playing upon them. At other Times, how was I terrified! I fled from the rueful Scene with eager Haste, and was ready to urge all that were dear to me to follow.

----- When down at once
Precipitant, descends a mingled Mass
Of roaring Winds and Flame and rushing
Floods;
In wild Amazement fix'd the Sailor stands;
Art is too slow. *Thomson.*

BUT there was an Opportunity given me, to view the Sea, only by the Turn of an Eye, in its opposite Dresses. And with what alternate Surprize did I view it under the full powerful Influence of a Storm, and under the Covert of a neighbouring Port? In the one I saw wild
D 5 Confusion,

Confusion, boundless Rage, and even the Dregs of Nature fetched up from the Bottom, and Mire and Dirt mingled with the Chrystal Element: Every Wave was a Terror to its Fellow; and while Violence was committed, Violence was readily returned; even Heaven itself seemed to be aimed at, tho', thro' a Defect of Power, the Injury recoiled on itself; every Object in the Way felt a Shock, and whether damaged or not, was affronted. What foaming Rage did I behold while *these* Billows lashed the Rocks, and *those* fell foul upon and broke one another? But how different was the Haven adjoining? how little, if any, the Agitation of the Vessels riding there? the Surface was as smooth almost as a Bowling-green! How sweet an Emblem, and how strong* of a good Man under the benign Influences of Humility, Meekness, dove-like Charity, and *that Peace of God which passeth all Understanding* †? The Wicked are like yon troubled Sea, vexatious to themselves and one another; they many Times blaspheme God, dare the Power and Vengeance of the Almighty, and rush upon the thick Bosses of his Buckler: Instead of running, as Brethren, into one another's Embraces, they dash each other to Pieces, and so are mutually destructive: Peace is a Stranger to their Breasts, for the *Way* of Peace they

* Emblem instructive of the virtuous Man
Who keeps his temper'd Mind serene and pure,
And every Passion aptly harmoniz'd
Amid a jarring World with Vice inflam'd.

Thomson, p. 74.

† Phil. iv. 7.

they have not known. Perhaps to Day they rage against God, perhaps tomorrow they dread his Wrath falling upon them as a tottering Mountain and Rocks heaped one upon another. Their Conduct is dreadfully presuming, and by and by their Passions are overspread with Terror. They trembled at *Jehovah's* Wrath, and yet will not sue for Mercy. They see the Road of Sin leading to utter and remediless Destruction, and yet are so hardy as to be determined not to bend the Knee, nor bow the Spirit in humble Contrition. I know of nothing more like to the Temper and Language of the Devil, as described by *Milton*.

That Glory never shall his Wrath or might
Extort from me, to bow or sue for Grace
With suppliant Knee and deify his Power.

B. i. l. 110.

BUT while I dread and deprecate such a Situation, dishonourable to God and tempestuous to myself, I would intreat that I may be as the Bark imbayed in a safe and calm Retreat. Let the Sacred Spirit come and bring his purifying and refreshing Influences with him. May he, who I hope hath in some Measure healed my Nature, ease my Pains, refresh my Spirits, otherwise labouring with Sorrows; and by shedding abroad the Divine Love in my Heart, create, as the Fruit of his Lips, Peace to my Breast. And may I not, O my Conscience, and O thou, who art greater than my Conscience, indulge to
a holy

a holy chearfulness, who have often had Recourse, with a broken Heart, to a Sin-forgiving God thro' the atoning Sacrifice of *Jesus*! Has not a Sight of Sin deeply impressed me, as against the Holiness and Authority of God's Law? and while bewailing my Apostacies from my Creator and Lord, have I not fled for Refuge, and often renewed the Flight? have not these Arms inclosed a dying Redeemer a thousand Times; and if I have cast Anchor on him am I not safe? can any Thing separate between him and me, thus united? and while united, is not the Union productive of absolute Safety and every positive Blessing? is not *Peace* one of the sweet and precious Legacies left by that dying Friend? and is not the Sacred Spirit the Administrator of that Will, that Believers may be sure to receive the Benefit, in the Possession of the Blessings therein bequeathed; and is he not for this Reason called the COMFORTER? O come, * cried I, as such to my Soul! May I find myself, as a Land-locked Vessel, under the Shelter of the towering Mountains of God's Perfections on my right Hand and on my left; that whence-

soever

* O thou whose Power o'er moving Worlds presides,
 Whose Voice created, and whose Wisdom guides,
 On darkling Man in pure Effulgence shine,
 And cheer the clouded Mind with Light divine.
 'Tis thine alone to calm the pious Breast
 With silent Confidence, and holy Rest;
 From thee, great God, we spring, to thee we tend,
 Path, Motive, Guide, Original, and End.

Rambler's Motto, No. 7.

soever the Storms of Trouble blow, I may find myself secure; while at the same Time I feel the aromatic Sweets, which are the Growth of those Hills, regaling all my Soul. And, as the Attendants and Effects of this blessed Experience, may I feel those Graces reigning within, in which the Kingdom of God consists, Love to God and Man, Long-suffering, Meekness, Gentleness, Benevolence towards all, a Readiness to forgive, to do Good for Evil, and a growing Conformity to my great Example. O blessed Disposition! Recommended to all in the Volume of the Gospel, wrought in a few by the sacred *Paraclete*. This is my Aim, Study and Prayer.

DID I not verily know, how highly you estimate the Divine Consolations arising from the Principles of the Gospel, and especially as you have had such a rich Experience of them, I should fear my long Harangue would weary you; but you esteem them your Earnest, your Antepasts of Glory, and therefore encourage my Enlargement.

I know not how to break off, while I omit telling you a Piece of News. I had almost forgot to acquaint you, that in this Journey I saw your Friend, who some Weeks before my Departure had taken his Leave of you, as he was then, by the Advice of Physicians, setting out for the southern Shore, to make Use of the Seawater for the Recovery of his Health. This he has done externally and internally. I had frequent

quent Opportunities of conversing with him; and, as your *Invalids* are apt to be dwelling on their own Complaints, and one Case draws on another, I was led to employ more Thoughts than ever upon the *Ocean*, as productive of *Physick* as well as *Food*. I did not imagine, till I came to enumerate, how much the Apothecary's Shop and impaired Constitution of Body are obliged to the Sea*: But the greatest Use made of the Sea by Physicians, is, administering it as a Drink, and bathing their Patients in it. Hence Obstructions in the glandular System have been frequently removed; and Consumptions, Schirrhuses, and Scrophula's have been nipt in the Bud†. My Reflection here was, I would not overlook the great Goodness of God in providing so suitable, extensive, and cheap a Medicine? How easy is it to be had by those who are near the Ocean? It is all ready and prepared; and, if Providence leads the Way and crowns all with a Blessing, what Benefits are received? It has proved a *Bethesda* to many, and the Halt, Lamè, and Withered have been healed. But what are all the Inventions of Men, and the Experiments they make upon this Head,

* Hence the roasted Pumice-stone, the calcined Sponge, burnt Cuttle-fish Bone, the Squill or Sea-onion so famous in Dropsies, Asthmas, &c. Oyster-shells, Coral, Amber, Crabs-eyes and Crabs-claws, Ambergrease, the *Quercus marina*, several Species of the Alga or Sea-weed, the Coralline or Sea-moss, Isinglass, Sperma Ceti, the Sal mirabile of *Glauber*, &c.

† See Dr. *Ruffel* on the Sea-water.

Head, compared with *Christ, the Fountain opened for Sin and for Uncleanneſs* *. Here, even in this divine Ocean, Souls find all their Relief. His Merits are no more confined, no more locked up, and we no more reſtrained from the Uſe of them, than the Ocean itſelf. *Here* would I enter myſelf a Patient; here may I bathe daily, by my renewed Application, by a living Faith: I would be drawn by the Diſplay of thoſe excellent Properties which recommend every Medicine, to an exact Suitableneſs to my Caſe, what is abundantly ſufficient to answer all my Wants, and a Preſcription from him who is infinitely wiſe and the greateſt Friend of the poor Patient. I conſider the Volume of Revelation, as the Diſpenſatory of this Phyſician, not only deſcribing its Preparation, but the Method of Application. Here I am directed at one Time to drink, and another Time to bathe, and all that I may be cleansed from the Filthineſſes of the Fleſh and Spirit, and, which is the Health of the Soul, that I may attain Perfection of Holineſs in the Fear of God.

I FIND the greateſt Patrons of Sea-water muſt own that in every Caſe it will not avail, and that in ſome Diſorders it is by no means adviſable, as being too great a *Stimulus*, and therefore may prove inflammatory, and perhaps fatal, as in *Cancers*, confirmed *Schirrbus's* *Conſumptions* †, &c. But, O bleſſed Redeemer! there
is

* Zech. xiii. 1.

† *Ruffel* on Sea-water, p. 14, 21, 153, & *alibi*.

is no Malady which thou can'st not relieve. Let my spiritual Distempers be never so various, and every one never so malignant, inveterate, or obstinate; though my whole Soul be emaciated, weakened, and corrupted; though from the Crown of the Head to the Sole of the Foot there be no Soundness; though the Schools of Philosophy, and all human Aids are Physicians of no Value, thy Blood can cleanse from every Iniquity: Thy Spirit can give me Life, though dead; can invigorate me when torpid; can raise me when faint, and bowed down; yea, can give that Strength and Alacrity, whereby I shall be enabled to *run without Weariness*, and work with Diligence and Activity.

SHOULD I attempt to apologize for the Tedi-ousness of this Letter, my Excuse would add to the Fault, I shall therefore, depending upon the Candour that always attends true Friendship, subscribe myself ever

Your affectionate Servant.

L E T.



LETTER IV.

On the OCEAN.

HONOURED SIR,

WHILE I profess a singular Respect for you, it is with a Pleasure peculiar to that Consciousness which reigns within, that the Pulse of my Soul beats with a warmer Stroke than my Words indicate. And if I can do nothing else in these my repeated Letters, I shall have the Satisfaction of making an Attempt to oblige one, whom it is an Honour to call a *Friend*, and who will perhaps point out my Faults, and make Reflections with greater Propriety of Thought and Language, at least by answering them will teach me by Example to write with more Correctness.

THE *Loadstone*, when Experiments have been made by it and upon it, hath often been the Object of my Admiration. But never more so (and perhaps not with half so much Delight) than when I have viewed it in Relation to the Ocean. While I consider the Mariner undertaking a Voyage of a thousand Leagues, and accomplishing it very much by the Help of this Mineral, I stand amazed; happy Invention of the *Compass*! *

What

* Supposed to be the Invention of the *Chinese*, and brought

What pity it is that the Name of the Inventor, the Time, the Manner, and other Circumstances of the Thing are not better known! Adorable Providence that made known the Magnet's wondrous Virtue! That the Needle touched by it should always point Northward, and thus indicate

brought into *Europe* by *Paulus Venetus* an *Italian*, in the Year 1260. And what confirms this Conjecture, is, that at first they used the Compass in the same Manner that the *Chinese* still do, *i. e.* they let it float on a little Piece of Cork, instead of suspending it on a *Pivot*. Some ascribe it to *Flavio de Melphi*, or *Fluvio Gioia*, a *Neapolitan*, about the Year 1302, and hence it is that the Territory of *Principato*, which makes a Part of the Kingdom of *Naples*, where he was born, bears a *Compass* in its Arms. *Fawcett* supposes it was known in France before discovered by the *Neapolitan*, or *Venetian*. And *Dr. Wallis* ascribes the first Invention to the *English*. *Chambers's Dict.* under COMPASS. Before the Invention of the Use of the *Pole-star* and the *Needle and Compass*, it is diverting to see what a Wonder was made of a small Voyage. It required almost a Council of Heroes, in *Homer's Time*, if they were to cross the *Ægean Sea*. Nay, for many Ages the Voyage of *Jason* with his *Argonauts* was the Wonder of the World, and spread abroad with all the Pomp of Oratory, the Invention of Fable, and the Flowers of Poetry. What Youth at School has not read *with Wonder*, of the Ship *Argo* fitted out to go to *Colchis*, to fetch the *Golden Fleece*; especially as the Poets represented their Gods as admiring the Exploit, and placing the Ship in the Heavens? and yet, after all, how trifling the Voyage to modern Navigators? But *Thales*, the *Milesian* Philosopher, had not yet lived (for he learned the important Use of the *Pole-star* from the *Phœnicians*, and imparted the Knowledge to the *Greeks*, about 600 Years before *Christ*) much less were the Wonders of the animated Needle on the Compass known.

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cate to the Seaman on what Point of the Compass he sails. In the darkest Nights, or the most cloudy Days, and in the most distant Parts of the trackless Ocean, and though immured in a narrow Cabin, this is a Light to his Feet, a Lamp to his Path, and under this Direction he steers to the remotest Regions.

HERE my Thoughts diverted for a Season to the Blessing of a revealed Gospel. O sweet and glorious Instructor! Blessed, necessary, seasonable Gift to a dark, benighted Traveller! Without thee I am bewildered in my Course, and know not the Path leading to God and Glory. My Reason unenlightened cannot teach me, tho' in the most restless Manner I cry, "O that I knew where I might find him!" Without my *Bible* in my Hand, my Compass, I ramble endlessly, sometimes fearing, sometimes hoping, but always uncertain. What unassisted Reason dictates one Day, it seems to forbid another; I change my Course frequently, and as often resume it. But when I come to *Revelation*, I am satisfied. I find a certain and invariable Rule to go by. I see it enstamped with Veracity: I set out with an humble Confidence, and proceed with Courage. *I walk in my Way with Safety, and my Foot does not stumble* *. I go to this Volume as to an Oracle, and it does not deceive me. I adore thee, O Father of Lights, who sawest the Nations dark and bewildered, and didst kindly repeat these ancient Words, *Let there*

* Prov. iii. 23.

there be Light *. I adore thee, O *Jesus*, thou great Prophet of the Church, and *Light of the World* †! With Bowels of Pity thou didst behold the Heathen Wanderers ‡ in the Condition of St. *Paul* and his Companions at Sea, beating about in the Dark, distressed with Fears, ignorant of their Course, founding often and to little Purpose, *neither Sun nor Stars appearing* §, and in thy tender Love thou didst send thy ancient Prophets, who by thy Spirit prophesied of the Grace that should afterwards be revealed ||, and at length didst come in thine own Person, and, by the Light which thou didst diffuse, didst point out the Way leading to the heavenly Port. I love the sacred Volume; I bind it upon my Heart; I hide it there ¶ as my choicest Treasure; I fly to it as my noblest Cordial, to support me under, and to guard me against my Faintings; I learn it as my best Song in the House of my Pilgrimage **. Here I see the Face of an offended God, once ruffled with Frowns, smoothed into Smiles, and the Reconciliation effected by unheard-of Methods, but such as are wise, holy, and perfectly satisfactory. I receive the Atonement, and joy in God thro' *Jesus Christ* ††. Here I see Life and Immortality

* Gen i. 3. † John viii. 12.

‡ Around them Night's impervious Gloom descends,
No Star to guide them, and no Gale befriends;
No Pilot near the Path untrackt to keep,
Tempestuous Darkness drives them o'er the Deep.

§ Acts xxvii. 20. || 1 Pet. i. 11, 12. ¶ Psalm cxix. 11. ** Psalm cxix. 54. †† Rom. v. 11.

lity brought to Light; I have the Path of Holiness marked out, the Line of Duty made plain, not only in the Precepts laid down in the Gospel, but in the Footsteps of *Christ* and his Saints, the most shining Patterns of every Excellence the World ever saw. In the Gospel I see the Sinner encouraged to the liveliest Hopes; the returning, mourning, blushing, dying Prodigal taken into paternal Arms; the Father's Love flowing in the warmest Manner from the Heart to his Lips, and sealed with a Kiss; and the Face foul with weeping, under a Sense of Disobedience, Ingratitude, Folly, and, in the Prospect of everlasting Banishment, wiped by the soft and tender Hand of Pity. By this divine Compass, which (by the Way hath no Variations in it) I see thousands sailing towards, and thousands more safely arrive at the *Fair Havens*; Havens, where they have found the safest Anchorage, the sweetest Repose, the kindest Friends, the noblest Entertainment, and the best of Blessings. I charge thee, O my Soul, ever adhere to this *Revelation*; let not base Infidelity, lurking under the Covert of the Night, by any specious Pretences rob thee of it; other Religions *pretend* and *promise*, this alone, of which *Jesus* is the Author, *performs*. None else can shew Peace ratified between Heaven and Earth: In other *Compasses* the Needle was never touched with the *true Magnet*, and so will never answer, nor can be depended on. --- O my Soul, while thou puttest a due Value upon the Gospel, intreat the good Spirit, as the all-wise Pilot, to undertake

undertake the Steerage, and may he enable thee to understand and apply the sacred Oracles at all Times in a proper Manner, and in this Way to be seeking after Glory, Honour, and Immortality.

THE Lesson I would learn, I am well satisfied, you, Sir, have been taught long ago. With what Judgment and Ardour have I heard you expatiate on the Excellencies of the Scriptures? With what Propriety of Argument establish their divine Original? And with what a Smile on your Countenance have I known you exult in the Grace in which you stand, while their Light shone around you, and their Warmth refreshed you? being led by their sacred Precepts, you made the Promises your Stay; Promises, whose Contents (you were wont to say, and say with Truth) are not more noble, than the Securities are firm.

IN how many Respects is the Ocean a Blessing? Not only does it supply the dry Land with Moisture, and by this Means every Creature dwelling upon it with Food, but (as I have observed) by the Interposition of Seas between vast Continents, an easy Communication is secured. Thus Travellers come to be acquainted with the various Inhabitants, Languages, Customs, Religions, Constitutions of Government, Learning, the Progress of Arts and Sciences, and the Produce of each Soil and Climate; and an easy Exchange is made of mutual Conveniencies. But methinks

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thinks the Sea has been honoured a few Times in a very peculiar Manner; there was a Time when the whole Race of Mankind was embarked upon one Bottom. Precious Charge! Important Ship! that carried the Lives of those few, who were to repeople the Globe. And here what a Scene opens? The great Deeps break up, overflow all the opposing Banks at the divine Command, meet the descending Torrents, and all conspire to cover the dry Land, and execute the Vengeance of an angry God. See now the mighty Structure set afloat, perhaps the first and largest Vessel that ever was launched, while the great God, who was before its Artichet, became its Insurer and Pilot, and preserved it thro' a Year's Voyage from fatal Leaks and fatal Dashes against every Rock in its Way, and enabled it at last to disembark its precious Freight upon Mount *Ararat*. --- Thus at the Command of an holy, wise, and merciful God in his Gospel I embark my choicest Treasures, my immortal *All*, upon one Bottom prepared by God himself, even on *Christ*. Into him I hope I have entered by Faith, as into an *Ark*, and account all Things but *Dung* that I may win him, and be found in him* As generally as he may be disregarded now, they, who being warned by Fear†, make sure of him, will be found, will be esteemed the Wise and Happy, when the Floods shall overwhelm the World of the Ungodly. And, blessed be God, I have the most satisfactory Assurance, that everlasting Safety shall attend the Soul,

* Phil. iii. 8.

† Heb. xi. 7.

Soul, that is interested in a once dying, but now living and exalted Redeemer. Not all the Powers of Hell shall wrest such a one out of *Christ's* Hands; for, as he is inviolably faithful to the Trusts reposed in him, so *he is able to keep what is committed to him**. On the other hand, O that Sinners would enter into the Ark of Salvation while they may, while the Gospel invites, and the Hand of Mercy holds the Door open; and, that they may no longer linger, may they remember that *when the Lord rises up, and shuts to the Door, it will be in vain to cry, " Lord, Lord, open to me*†.

OUR Redeemer, when he tabernacled among us, sometimes chose this Method of travelling. As he did not affect worldly Gaiety in any Thing else, so not at Sea. We do not find any *Royal Yatch* attending to receive him, nor any noble *Pinace* equipt and painted for his Voyage, nor any stately Ships of War prepared as his Convoys: Any Vessel at Hand he esteemed sufficiently commodious; a Fisherman's Boat is not disdained; thence at one Time he taught the People; there, in a mean and despicable Cabin he slept. O valuable Cargo, when *the Pearl of great Price* was on board! Storms shall never sink the Ship where *Jesus*, his Person, his Cause are embarked. May you and I rather accompany *Jesus*, though in Meanness and Tempests, than be among Worldlings in their most happy and seemingly safest Situations. How unsuitably

* 2 Tim. i. 12.

† Luke xiii. 25.

suitably accommodated is the Heir, the Lord of all Things! While I admire his *Grace, who, though rich, for our Sakes became poor**, let me never form an estimate of Persons from the Figure they make in worldly Greatness; nor let me account the Affluence of Life the proper Object of my covetous Desire, since he thought proper to despise it, *in whom were hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge*. How much unlike himself does he appear, who is *God manifest in the Flesh*†; but it was prophesied concerning him, that he should appear as *a Root springing out of a dry Ground, without Form or Comeliness*‡; yet in the midst of all his external Meanness, a Ray of his Divinity breaks forth. He shews himself to be the Sovereign of all; for he walks upon the Sea, and the Sea does, as it were, forget its fluid Nature to support the Steps of its God: Whether this was done by condensing the Surface, and *congealing the Depths in the Heart of the Sea*§, or by suspending the Gravitation of his own Body, it abundantly proves his unlimited Power; the same Power which made *Iron to swim*¶, performed this Miracle.

He who trod upon the Waters, in the Exercise of so wonderful a Sovereignty over them, evidenced the same Power over the Winds. A Word from him, who is the Lord of universal
 E Nature,

* 2 Cor. viii. 9. † Col. ii. 3. ‡ 1 Tim. iii. 16.
 § Isai. liii. 2. ¶ Exod. xv. 8. ¶ 2 Kings vi. 6.

Nature, quiets the Tempest, not only abates the Fury of the Storm in its vast Sweep, but turns it into a Calm. How easily can he disarm the Wrath of Man, though wrought up to the highest Rage? Or, if in this Breast of mine, Storms of distress arise, and the Waves beat in tremendous Fury from the Threatnings of the Law, and the Apprehensions of the divine Curse, so that I know not how to bear up, yet to him I would fly, even to his Foot of Mercy, the Bowels of his Compassion, and the Promises of his Gospel. A Word from thy Mouth, O Saviour, a Smile from thy Countenance will appease my Grief, be as a Balm to my wounded Spirit, *take off my Sackcloth, gird me with Gladness, and turn my Mourning into Dancing* *. When my *Jesus* frowns, all Nature is beclouded, the whole Creation hath lost its Beauty, my Comforts are Tasteless, and my Sleep departs. I seek him with Tears, I mourn as the Dove, I look to my right Hand and left, but cannot rest, till I have found the Centre of my Soul. My Riches are but Dross, till I can see my Interest in the Pearl of great Price; his Presence alone can *make my Bones*, before broken, to rejoice †.

BUT, methinks, I look with peculiar Pleasure upon yonder Sloop under Sail, when I consider that by such a Vehicle the *Gospel* of my Salvation was transported hither. If it had not been for such a Conveniency how could this inestimable

* Psalm xxx. 11.

† Psalm li. 8.

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mable Treasure of Grace have visited these distant Isles of the Gentiles? O blessed Ship that first brought the News of a *Jesus*! methinks I am almost ready to compare it with that *Angel*, that was honoured to bring the Tidings of a Saviour born to the poor Shepherds.

WHILE I stood upon the *Strand*, and saw the *Tide* making its gradual Progress, and at length overflowing the spacious sandy Plain, and in an Hour or two hiding from my Eye a Tract almost immeasurable, and erasing a thousand Figures imprinted upon the beachy Level, it gave me a melancholy View of the many Impressions, which I once had, under the Hand of God's Providence, or by other Methods, but which were quickly lost. I fear, and almost conclude that this has been the Case of too many round me: When the Word has come with Power to the Conscience, recalled to Mind the Sins of former Days, thrust aside every Excuse and every Extenuation, which was held up against Convictions, brought to the open Sight of the Sinner the Denunciations of the Wrath of God Almighty, as too certain to be avoided, and too dreadful to be borne, O how solemn the Temper of the Soul? How precious is *Christ Jesus* now to the Person, as redeeming from the Curse of the Law? How earnest is the Sinner's Cry for Mercy? The Knee, before stiffened by Obduracy and Unbelief, readily bows; and Cries, unheard before, are uttered with an agonizing Emphasis. But how soon does the World, managed by the So-

phistry of the Wicked One, enter, and gradually, as the Tide, overspread the Face of the Soul, and too soon there is little left, and nothing to be seen of the foregoing Impressions. Nay, perhaps the Sinner is carried so far into Excesses, by breaking thro' former Restraints, grieving the good Spirit, and so acquiring peculiar Degrees of Hardness of Heart, that the latter End is worse than the Beginning, and he is fourfold the Child of Hell more than before.

How often have I seen the Vanity of the World, and of my former Pursuits in it, when I have attended my once busy Friends and Neighbours upon their Death-beds, or groaning in their sick Chambers? Ah, *thought I*, who would be so eager to obtain great Riches? Do they relieve the Body under its Pains? Does my Neighbour's Reflection upon his former successful Projects, upon which he employed so much Time, Thought, and Anxiety, yield a suitable Cordial to his fainting Spirits? How much otherwise? He writes *Fool* upon all his former Schemes, in which he was applauded by himself, and others, as a wise Man: Like a silly Sheep he is laid in his Grave, and Death will feed upon him; and, O that this Character were not justly due to his *Survivors*? But alas! if frightened for a Moment, they return again to Folly as the Sheep, when one out of the Flock is taken away, in a short Space are recovered out of their Surprise.

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and feed as thoughtlessly in the green treacherous Pasture as before.

When by the Bed of Languishment we sit---
Or, o'er our dying Friends, in Anguish hang,
Wipe the cold Dew, or stay the sinking Head,
Number their Moments, and in every Clock
Start at the Voice of an Eternity ---

We bleed, we tremble---we forget, we smile.
The Mind turns Fool, before the Cheek is dry;
Our quick-returning Folly cancels all;
As the Tide rushing raises what is writ
In yielding Sands, and smooths the letter'd Shore.

Young.

SINCE it is thus I would carry my Complaint
to him, whose Grace is sufficient for me, to
quicken a Soul cleaving to Dust; and pray that as
he is most intimately acquainted with the Dangers
of my present *Warfare*, or shall I rather say my
Voyage o'er this tempestuous, dangerous Ocean,
as he most perfectly knows the Artifice and Ma-
lice of my pyritical Foes, the Struggle of in-
bred Corruptions, the latent Quicksands, Shelves,
and Rocks in my Course, he would adapt those
Measures of Wisdom for Discernment, those De-
grees of corroborating Grace, which my Case
calls for, and that he would, in one Word,
make me superior to every Danger, and land me
safe on the happier Shores of a blessed Immor-
tality.

Thou that can'st still the Raging of the Seas,
Chain up the Winds, and bid the Tempests cease,
Redeem my shipwreck'd Soul from raging Gusts
Of cruel Passion, and deceitful Lusts;
From Storms of Rage, and dang'rous Rocks
of Pride

Let thy strong Hand this little Vessel guide,
(It was thy Hand that made it) thro' the Tide
Impetuous of this Life; let thy Command
Direct my Course and bring me safe to Land.
Prior's King Solomon.

I WOULD often direct my Eye in the Actings
of Faith to the World of Spirits; and would
intreat, that as I have the Favour of your Con-
versation, personal and literary, you would be
to me as Iron sharpening Iron; and, if in any
Thing, I could entertain the Thought of my
Ability to make a Return for such a Kindness,
with how much Readiness should I approve my-
self, Worthy Sir,

Your affectionate Servant?

L E T.



LETTER V.

On the OCEAN.

IF my honoured Friend will once more excuse me, while I attempt to impart to him my Contemplations on the Ocean, I hope I shall no more upon this Occasion intrude upon his Patience, but leave him to his better Thoughts. I crave your Indulgence, if I proceed.

WHEN I view those Ships traversing the mighty Deep, laden with various Merchandize, and steering in so exact a Manner, I cannot but call to Mind, with how much Discretion the Almighty hath instructed Man. The Art first of building, and then of navigating those floating Houses is surprising, and all flowing from him, who is the Father of Lights, and Fountain of Wisdom of every Kind. Under the Divine Conduct the massy Oaks are hewn from yonder Hills, and shaped into Planks and Beams of various Sizes and Forms, fastened together by Iron, dug perhaps from the Bowels of the same Eminence; while the high-towering and shapely Pine furnishes the Vessel with Masts, and these are strengthened with Cordage, and overspread with Canvass from a more humble Vegetable. But while I know nothing of that noble Art, may I, O thou who teachest Man Knowledge, and

whose Inspiration giveth him Understanding, may I be instructed and directed in the Path of my particular Vocation to fill up some useful Station of Life, and at the same Time be taught by the Holy Spirit that Knowledge of thyself and Son, which carries in it eternal Life. Teach me the Wonders, which are infolded in that most glorious Work of thine, that Wisdom of GOD in a Mystery, *The Redemption of the World by Jesus Christ*. Let me not be ignorant, where Knowledge is most necessary, where Ignorance is quite ruinous, where Salvation is the Subject, and where Heaven and Hell are the Consequences. I would see those Wonders, which Angels are ever admiring, and because inexhaustible, are ever studying. Shall the Matter be entertaining to Creatures of the *most sublime* Genius, and yet be thought too mean for Polite and Learned *Worms*? Hath the *only wise* GOD given us, as it were, a Stretch of his Wisdom, and shall Mortals turn away their Eyes, be blind to the Contrivance, or indolently nod over the Contemplation? O thou Enlightener of Souls, shine upon and strengthen my intellectual Powers, remove the Scales of Ignorance and Prejudice, help me to look 'till I adore most solemnly, 'till my Praise is most enlarged, 'till my Love is most flaming, my Joy boundless, and all my Soul feels the sweet, but powerful, Constraint.

BUT ah me! what do I see there? ---- surprising Sight! a poor Sailor seems to be asleep on the Top of yonder Mast! how amazing the
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Depth of the Precipice beneath him! ----- hazardous Situation, tho' thoroughly awake and all his Powers in vigorous Exercise! every Motion of the Ship affects him, every Gust of Wind rocks him, every Rope may by some Means or other deceive, and fail him! -- ---- Would not *any* Man, tho' possessed but of a Grain of Wisdom, leave those dreadful Heights as soon as possible? But would any *rational* Creature make his Bed there, compose himself to Slumbers, or dare so much as to close his Eye-lids thereon? Perhaps the poor Creature may now be indulging soft and flattering Dreams; it may be his airy Fancy is painting out flowery Scenes and golden Visions; perhaps he may be ranging the Courts of Princes and climbing a Pinnacle of Honour to an equal Height with his present terrible Situation; or he may be treasuring up Silver as the Dust, or the Gold of *Ophir* as the Stones of the Brook*: Perhaps the snoring Wretch imagines nothing else but that he hath taken some rich Prize†, and is dividing the Spoil with his Companions, and may now be in his fantastic Reveries laying Schemes for Futurity, to live at Ease, or in the midst of Luxury and Grandeur. --- And O that there were not Examples of Infatuation as egregious as that of the Man before me! What is every Sinner, stupid in his Sins, unpardoned, unsanctified, at a Distance from God, but the Sailor on yonder

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Mast,

* Job xxii. 24.
montes.

† *Aureos sibi metipsis pollicentur*

Maſt, the Sport of Winds rocking in the Shrouds? Is not every ſuch Tranſgreſſor as thoughtleſs of his Danger, and preſumptuous even to Madneſs, while he tempts the Vengeance of the Almighty, dares his Thunderbolt, and hangs over the Lake which burneth with Fire and Brimſtone? So precarious is his Situation that *the leaſt* Breath of the Almighty, or the ſtopping of his own for a few Minutes, hurries him to Hell! Methinks he ſhould dread to lie down to Sleep, leſt he ſhould awake among Devils, and his Bed ſhould be changed into tormenting Flames; and yet (wondrous Lethargy!) he *reposes himſelf* upon it as much at Eaſe, as if he had made a Covenant with Death that it ſhould not give him any Diſturbance, and both Heaven and Earth were at Peace with him, and his Peace were inviolable. As he lies down without GOD, without either the Fear of him or Supplication to him, ſo he ariſes from his Sleep, as a Beaſt to his Fodder, and proceeds thoughtleſſly thro' the Dangers of the Day, as an Ox going to the Slaughter. He treads upon Snares, every one of which may be fatal. He cries *Peace and Safety*, tho' ſudden Deſtruction may be at his Heel. Hardy Worm! he neither courts the Favour nor fears the Frowns of the Almighty. His Cry is, " Let us eat and drink for to Morrow we die *." Or elſe, " We have Goods
" laid

* 1 Cor. xv. 32. *Ede, Bibe, Lude, poſt Mortem nulla Voluptas.*

“ laid up for many Years, let us eat, drink, and be merry †.” Thus indolent Sinners are dreaming and deceiving themselves. But, O my Soul, what soporiferous Drugs are those Pillows infected with, that compose Sinners to sleep in such Circumstances? Does not some fatal *Opium* lull all their mental Powers? To what amazing Hazards are they exposing their immortal Interests? There is not a Curse in all the Stores of Wrath but may be a Talent of Lead to sink them into the Bottomless Abyfs; and yet they are regardless about Deliverance from them, as if the *Clouds of Sinai* bore only a harmless Thunder, without any pointed and irresistibly consuming Lightnings. They fly from a Fellow-worm, or take Pains to appease his Wrath, because superior in Power, but never bend the Knee before the *incensed Omnipotence*, nor hide themselves in that Refuge, provided and set open by the unsearchable Wisdom and rich Grace of the offended Deity; and, tho’ every Moment they are liable to be crushed by the Weight of his vengeful Arm, they refuse to beg it may be averted.

THUS I was indulging to Reflections serious and awful, when I heard a most horrid Shriek, and turning my Eye towards the Quarter whence it came, I was just quick enough to discern the Plunge from that stupendous Height into the Waves below. The Motion awakened *the slumbering Victim*, and the first Impression extorted
a Cry,

a Cry, which, as it was vehemently *loud*, so it was the *last* that his Voice uttered. Some few Struggles were made, and thus he sunk remedilessly. But, O my Soul, cried I, this is but a faint Resemblance of the Terrors of that Wretch, who by the Concussion of Death is at once roused out of his long and stupid Doze and pleasing Dreams. *Natural* Death carries in it an Idea of Sensation lost, in that it locks up all the Animal vital Powers. The *second* Death is so far from importing such a Thought, that to the Wicked it turns every Whip into a Scorpion, every Needle into a Dagger, every Drop of Gall into an Ocean of Bitterness, and every Spark into a Blaze of Vengeance. What does that disembodied Spirit feel, who sees in the strongest Light the Authority and Love it trampled under Foot, the Rectitude and Goodness of God's Precepts, the Riches of his Promises, the Grace, the Condescension, the Sufferings and Death of the eternal Son of God incarnate, and all the aggravating Circumstances, which attended its Provocations? who sees at one View the multiplied Methods taken to reclaim it, and its Obstinacy in opposing them, who recollects all the Invitations which Mercy made, the extended Arms of a *dying ascended* Redeemer, the tender Expostulations often repeated, the Cords of Love interwoven and attracting it to God in smiling Providences, and the Rods which in afflictive Dispensations were designed to drive it from the Brink of the Pit, but all rendered abortive by an evil Heart of Unbelief. This evil Heart,
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devoid of that Wisdom which Faith instills, and full of that Folly which arises from the Powerful Influence of Sensuality, stagnates all the Powers of Reason, and stifles the feeble Operations of Conscience somewhat awakened, turns the Man into a refined Brute, and makes him entirely regardless of Immortality. O doleful State! where every Thing conspires to render the Sinner miserable, and every Thought adds to the Weight already too heavy to be borne! The Soul sinks deeper, still deeper into the burning Lake, feels every Reflection entering more keenly, and, like a Fire-brand turned into the very Element that has seized on it, it imbibes every Hour fresh Sensations of fiery Wrath, and, as it were, dilates itself to take in a larger Measure of the tormenting Flame. Thus Misery heaped upon Misery would overwhelm the wretched Creature, but that the same Power that inflicts the Sentence of Justice, sustains the Sufferer.

If, dear Sir, the Operations of Saving Grace have rescued us, even us, from this tremendous Scene, and from becoming Victims to Divine Vengeance, the more terrible the Prospect, the more enlarged should be our Praises; our Sense of Obligation should be so much the more lively, and the Divine Favour, the Riches of Mercy should be so much the more endeared to us. If Convictions of Sin, and an Apprehension of Wrath, have alarmed our Souls, and caused them to take Sanctuary in the Merits of the Saviour,

in

in the Power and Promises of Divine Grace manifested in the Gospel, we as much owe it to the conducting Hand of the Divine Spirit, as *Lot* did his Deliverance from a burning *Sodom* to the Angel who not only informed him of his Danger, but pressed him to make *Halte*, and kindly took him by the Hand to lead him to a *Zoar*. ---

--- BUT what means that Murmur? --- Alas, a Storm is coming on; Clouds gather; Darkness is invading the whole Face of Nature; --- GOD is bringing the Winds out of his Treasures; --- they rise higher still; the Trees feel their Influence; they shake, they bow their lofty Heads; how their Leaves and Branches are scattered? 'tis well if their crackling Trunks escape an Overthrow. --- But I expect a more awful Appearance on the Ocean. --- Surprising! more so than any Scene that ever struck my alarmed Eye *. See how the Surges rise! what mountainous Billows swell and roll! What hideous Caverns gape? Sheets of Water are separated and carried to a Distance! How do the Waves

lash

* *Incubuerunt Mari, totumque à Sedibus imis
Una Euræusque Notusque ruunt, creberque procellis
Africus; et vastos volvunt ad Littora Fluctus.
Insequitur Clamorque Virum, Stridorque Rudentum.
Eripiunt subito Nubes Cælumque Diemque
Teucrorum ex Oculis: Ponto Nox incubat atra.
Intonuere Poli, et crebris micat Ignibus Æther.*

Virg. Æneid. Lib. I.

Earth in their Course the giddy Whirlwinds sweep,
Rush to the Seas, and bare the Bosom of the Deep:
East, West, and South, all black with Tempests roar,
And roll vast Billows to the trembling Shore,

The

last yonder Rocks? how widely do they spread
upon the more level Strand !---What will be-
come of those Vessels which I saw a little while
ago sailing so smoothly upon that Sea of Glass?
amazing if they can live amidst so vast a Con-
fusion! How will they climb those Precipices?
how will they emerge, when buried in those
watry Graves? See one poor Bark, as it were
hangs upon the broken Wave.

----- Advent'rous he,

Who in the first Ship broke the unknown Sea;
And leaving his dear native Shores behind,
Trusted his Life to the licentious Wind.
I see the surging Brine; the Tempest raves: }
He on a Pine-Plank rides across the Waves, }
Exulting on the Edge of thousand gaping }
Graves. Watts.

O HOW much is to be learnt by a Storm? It
is GOD that raiseth *the stormy Wind, which lift-
eth up the Waves of the Sea; they mount up to the
Heaven, they go down to the Depths* *. How aw-
ful are the Exhibitions of the Almighty? What
Wonders of Judgment and Mercy his Word
produces?

The Cordage cracks; with unavailing Cries }
The *Trojans* mourn; while sudden Clouds arise, }
And ravish from their Sight the Splendors of the }
Skies. }
Night hovers over the Floods; the Day retires ;
The Heavens flash thick with momentary Fires ;
Loud Thunders shake the Poles----- Pitt.

* Psalm cvii. 25, &c.

produces? *The stormy Winds fulfill his Word* †. O how dreadful to fall into the Hands of a GOD, with whom is such terrible Majesty! Sinners may think lightly of his Wrath, and dismiss the Thought with an Apprehension that they shall be wise enough to escape, or hardy enough to ride out the raging Blasts: But, O that they did but see with that Clearness, and consider with that Seriousness, which the Matter calls for! Dost thou, indolent, insolent Sinner, imagine thou canst contend with GOD, or cope with Omnipotence? Try thy Power in some smaller Matters: Stop the Sun in its rapid Progress; bring back the Seasons and invert them; bid the Flowers spring up in Winter, or drive in the Severities of Frost and Snow upon Harvest; or do but command these Winds to cease, which rage with such impetuous Fury. If thou canst not preserve thy Body from dropping into the Grave, and render it immortal, how canst thou keep the Soul from sinking into Hell? Does many a hardy Mariner, who before seem'd neither to fear GOD or regard Man, tremble like a Leaf when shaken with the Wind, and is he even at his Wits End in this Tumult of the Ocean; what then will the Sinner do, when GOD shall call forth *all* his Wrath? and how will the now obdurate Miscreant be able to stand, when the whole Storm of Vengeance shall be sent against him, and beat upon him with a Fury and Power, which Eye never saw, and Heart

Heart never felt? He may now, like *Leviathan*, laugh at the shaking of the Spear, and the Sword may be to him as rotten Wood, when brandished in the Threatnings of the Almighty; but when these Threatnings come to be executed, and the Spear enters into his very Heart, and pierces to his very Marrow, whither, O whither will he fly, or, how will he endure?

BUT blessed be GOD, *there is a Covert from such Storms**, sweet Character of my Blessed Redeemer! if none can abide the Day of GOD's Wrath, when the Cedars of *Lebanon* are torn from their Roots, and the Rocks are thrown down before him, hide me, O hide me, with uplifted Hands, a melted Heart, and flowing Eyes, I intreat thee, hide me in the Hollow of thine Hand, in thy suffering and bleeding Heart. Do the Birds of the Air, and the Beasts of the Field from an Instinct of Nature foresee the approaching Shower, and make haste to their Retreat? let my Fears drive me, let my Hopes waft me on the Wings of Faith to thy blessed Self, who callest thyself *an Hiding-place from the Wind, and a Covert from the Tempest†*.

How happy the Case of those, who, in all the Affairs and amidst all the Dangers of Life, have a sure Interest in him who governs these boisterous Elements, and either slackens or straitens the Reins of his Restraint, as shall be most subservient

* Isaiah xxv. 4.

† Isaiah xxxii. 2.

subservient to his own Glory and his People's Welfare! Need they fear *the Noise of many Waters*, when the Lord their Friend and Father *sitteth upon them, and ruleth the proud Waves of the Sea**? Cannot Omnipotence restrain the Enemy's Fury and defend the feeble Favourite? *David*, when by the Exercise of Faith, his Soul was grown strong and courageous, faces Storms without Fear, yea, with an Air of Triumph. The Cave of *Adullam* was as a boisterous Sea, when *Saul* and his Army were now come to its very Mouth. The persecuted Innocent might well say, as he does, that his Soul *was among Lions, even the Sons of Men, whose Teeth were Spears and Arrows*, and yet he is, like a Ship, riding at Anchor in the midst of a Tempest†. *My Heart is fixed, O God, my Heart is fix'd, I will sing and give Praise; awake, my Glory, awake Psaltery and Harp, &c.*

OFTEN hath the Lord permitted the gracious Soul, for wise Reasons, to be terrified for a Season; often hath the convulsed Breast of the tender Christian testified to the Agonies within; *Deep hath called to Deep at the Noise of God's Water-spouts, and all his Waves and his Billows went over him †*. But when the Almighty Comforter hath taken of that which is *Christ's*, and shewn it to the Soul, when he hath made seasonable Manifestations of the Compassion, All-sufficiency,

* Psalm xciii. 4. Psalm xxix. 10.

† Psalm lvii. 1.

‡ Psalm xlii. 7.

sufficiency, and faithfulness of his Saviour, when he hath brought home a Promise, and sealed it to the Believer, and shewed him his Name written in the Lamb's Book of Life, how hath the Prospect been changed? The many mournful Lamentations are heard no more; but the blessed Virgin's Triumph is taken up, "*My Soul doth magnify the Lord, my Spirit rejoiceth in God my Saviour* *." And if the Redeemer will evidence himself thus indulgent and faithful in behalf of his particular Members, how secure then may I judge his Church, which is his Body, to be under his Patronage? A Ship in a Storm is an Emblem of the Church in many of its Ages †: how dreadful and threatening its Dangers? How long has the Storm many Times continued? *Christ* at the same Time has seemed to be asleep, as if regardless of its Peril; the Disciples have cried and expostulated, "*Master, carest thou not that we perish* ‡?" And perhaps the Hurricane has been still increasing, so that they have been tempted to say, "*The Lord hath forsaken us and our God hath forgotten us* §." But by this they have been excited to a stronger Faith and more fervent Cries; at length the Season of Deliverance has come, and then the Lord *hath awaked as one out of Sleep,*
and

* Luke i. 46.

† *Niteris incassum Christi submergere Navem, Fluctuat, at nunquam mergitur illa Ratis.*

‡ Mark iv. 38.

§ *Isaiah xlix. 14*

*and like a mighty Man that shouteth by Reason of Wine**; and shewed that he rode as on the Wings of the Wind for their Salvation. *The Wrath of Man has been made to praise him, and the Remainder thereof he has restrained †.* Thus *Zion appears to be wrote upon the Palms of his Hands, and her Walls to be continually before him §.*

ONCE more, that Sea, methinks, is an Emblem of the present Life; how uncertain is it? even to a Proverb ‡.

What solid Worth in thee can Mortals find,
Faithless, uncertain as the Sea and Wind?

An Hour ago how smooth and even? It appeared as a molten Looking-Glass; it seemed by its smiling Aspect to tempt the Stranger to embark upon it; how delightfully did the Ships sail? Every Vessel had the Air of a *Pleasure-Boat*; but how soon, alas how soon, have I seen the Scene shift! Nothing but Melancholy and Terror have since stood before me; every Vessel within my Sight hath reeled; several have been thrown ashore; one broken into a thousand Pieces upon yonder Rock; another foundered in the Road and sunk; some *precious* Lives have been lost, and others saved with the utmost Difficulty, and every

* Psalm lxxviii. 65.

† Psalm lxxvi. 10.

§ Isaiah xlix. 15.

‡ Et tantum constans in Levitate sua est.

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every Heart probably has been filled with Fear *. How many heart-rending Shrieks have I heard? How many have cast their dear-bought Wares into the Sea, and others have lost their All. O mournful Emblem of many a Case upon Land! With *Job* for a Season they prospered and rejoiced; *they washed their Steps in Butter, and the Rock poured out for them Rivers of Oil* †, here-upon they put far from them every Thing gloomy; they said they should die in their Nests, *their Root was spread out by the Waters, and the Dew lay all Night upon their Branch* ‡. But alas! the Event shewed what little Dependance was to be placed on the Smiles of the Creature; God loosed their Cord and afflicted them, and now their Soul is poured forth within them, *and the Days of Adversity have hold on them, and their Sins take no Rest* §. If this hath been the Case
of

- * On Pleasure's flowing Brink we idly stray,
Masters as yet of our returning Way;
Seeing no Danger, we disarm our Mind,
And give our Conduct to the Waves and Wind,
Then in the flow'ry Mead, or verdant Shade
To wanton Dalliance negligently laid,
We weave the Chaplet, and we crown the Bowl,
And smiling see the nearer Waters roll;
Till the strong Gusts of raging Passions rise,
Till the dire Tempest mingles Earth and Skies;
And swift into the boundless Ocean borne,
Our foolish Confidence too late we mourn;
Round our devoted Heads the Billows beat,
And from our troubled View the lessen'd Lands
retreat. Prior.

† *Job* xxix. 6.
16, 17.

‡ *Job* xxix. 9

§ *Job* xxx.

of many, and may be mine, let the World smile
never so enchantingly, never let me be vainly
confident, but ever humbly prepared for adverse
Changes.

Tho' prosp'rous Gales my Canvas crowd,
Tho' smooth the Waves, serene the Sky,
I trust not Calms, they Storms forebode,
And speak the approaching Tempest nigh.
Then, Virtue, to the Helm repair,
Thou, Innocence, shalt guide the Oar ;
Now rage, ye Winds, and rend the Air,
My Bark, thus mann'd, shall gain the Shore.

ON the other Hand, if Difficulties and Distresses arise in the Course of God's Providence, let me not, with a sullen Frown upon my Temper, conclude that it will never be otherwise, and that God has forgotten to be gracious, and that he will be favourable no more ; let me rather raise my drooping Head and indulge to a pleasing Hope, that the present Clouds will scatter ; assured that, though the Lord may for wise and holy Reasons, hide his Face from me, his Perfections, Love, and Promises are the same, and that with everlasting Loving-kindness he will gather me under his Wings, where I shall be comfortably refreshed as well as safe.

The Storm is ceas'd---the *Thunders* know their
God,
And still their Roar. O how severe is felt
His Frown in Nature, tho' his *Frown of Love* !
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Each Prospect mourns! from all the languid Tribe
 Of weeping *Flow'rs*, and every dripping *Tree*.
 Soon shall your short-soil'd Beauties be repair'd
 By glossier Lustres and more spic'd Perfumes;
 For see the *Sun* his fresh refulgent Rays
 Pours on the Skirt of yon soft fleecy Cloud,
 That forms a shadowy *Arch* of dazzling *Lifts*;
 Gay *Yellow*, Em'rald *Green*, and Morning *Red*,
Aurora's Blush; a shining *Zone*, engrain'd
 In Tints of Heav'n. With whose sweet Aspect
 pleas'd,

God (in Remembrance of sworn Amity
 With Earth establish'd, a perpetual League)
 Gracious will look; his Cov'nant-symbol own'd
 Of Peace and full exterminated Ire.

Browne's Sunday Thoughts, last Edit. p. 151.

I was well pleased with the Device upon the
 Coach of a *Dutch* Embassador, 1652; a Wo-
 man was painted sitting forlorn close to the Body
 of a Tree on the shady Side, while the Sun
 shone forth with scorching Beams, with this
 Motto, "TRUNCO NON FRONDIBUS," inti-
 mating, that she was more beholden to the Body
 of the Tree than to its Branches. The Leaves
 of Prosperity, green and showy, will be found
 to be a slight Defence, yea, will wither and
 drop; but as the solid Body remains the same
 through every Season, so the Christian may say,
 "The Lord liveth, and blessed be my Rock*."
 His Attributes and Covenant are the Refuge of
 the Saint's Faith and Hope, particularly those
 Promises

* Psalm xviii. 46.

Promises which assure him that *the Lord will be with him in Trouble* *, and make heavy and bitter Afflictions to issue in unspeakable and everlasting Advantage †. In the Day of Prosperity I may rejoice. but let it be with trembling. Let me use my Comforts with a holy Moderation; let me honour God with my Substance, and serve him with Gratitude and Joyfulness in the Abundance of all Things, and be daily expecting *when* the Scene shall change, and the Clouds gather and return ‡. One Thing I have a thousand Times desired of the Lord, and that I would still seek after, and humbly insist upon, that while I am passing thro' this World, like the Sailor traversing the Ocean, I may be embarked upon *Christ*, and may be enabled to keep my Heart on the heavenly World, that so, being ever under the Conduct of his Spirit, with his Word as my Pole-star in my Eye, whatever Wind blows, he may support my feeble Vessel, manage my Sails, hold the Helm, strengthen the Anchor of my Hope, quicken me by his Breath, and bring me safe with full Assurance, even as a Ship under Sail §, to the Haven of Rest and everlasting Felicity. And if I am shipwrecked

as

* Psal. xci. 15. † Rom. viii. 28, 2 Cor. iv. 17.

‡ Et quæ tibi læta videntur:

Dum loqueris fieri tristia posse puta. Ovid.

Irus & est subito qui modo Cræsus erat. Ib.

§ Heb. vi. 11. Πληροφορία. Metaphora a navibus, cum plenis velis incitatae feruntur. Aret. Leigh's Crit. Sacr. Videtur proprie dici πληροφορεῖσθαι, is qui quasi Velis, sic Fiducia suâ fertur ad eam rem quâ confidit, ut sit metaphora à navibus.

as to all the Comforts of Life, may I still cleave close to my God in *Christ*, in the Exercise of *Faith* and *Love*, and let there be a mutual Inhabitation between him and my Soul*, and whatever Separations I may undergo, let neither Death nor Life, nor any other Creature, separate between him and me.

So when the Merchant sees his Vessel lost,
Tho' richly freighted from a foreign Coast,
Gladly for Life the Treasure would he give,
And only wishes to escape and live;
But driving o'er the Billows with the Wind,
Gold and his Gains no more employ his Mind,
Cleaves to *one faithful Plank*, and leaves the
rest behind.

Rowe.

THUS, my good Friend, I have communicated my Thoughts upon the Ocean with too much Tedioufness I fear, and too much Confusion: If you can pick out any Thing that is in any Degree entertaining, your Pleasure will be shared by, Sir,

Your most obliged Servant, &c.

* 1 John iv. 16.



LETTER VI.

On the HARVEST.

----- *Ye Harvests wave to him.
Breathe your still Song into the Reaper's Heart,
As home he goes beneath the joyous Moon.*
Thomson's Hymn.

CONTEMPLATION I esteem one of the noblest Employments of the rational Creature. It is the directing and fixing the intellectual Eye upon suitable Objects, attended with proper Reflection: This, if rightly managed, brings in abundant Profit, and a sublime Delight. By this Means we lay up Treasures of Knowledge in the Store-house of the Soul, and bring them forth as there is Occasion in the Exercise of Wisdom, to the Honour of him, who is the first Cause and the last End of all Things; the rational and profitable Entertainment of our own selves, and the Welfare and Comfort of those round about us. By intense Study I trace the Works of God, and find the Volume of Creation a very informing Theme. I wander among the fixed Stars, and they read to my attentive Mind Lectures of divine Philosophy, and tell me surprising Stories of the Majesty, the Wisdom, and Benignity of their great Creator. By this Means the Sun does not rise, but it leads me by its Beams into

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into the Light of the Knowledge of *the Glory of God*: and even the *Moon*, though its Voice is more feeble, yet in a soft and distinct Accent proclaims a Deity*.

WHEN I take my silent Walks late in the Evening, and survey the vast Canopy above me, how *exalted*, how *extended*, how *adorned* as with Spangles of Gold, I am amazed: Though all is silent without me, there is a strong Language within me; though no Sound strikes upon my Ear, the most nervous Instruction is conveyed to my Heart.

The spangled Heav'ns, a shining Frame,
Their great Original proclaim, &c. *Addison*.

BY *Contemplation* I sometimes descend into the Bowels of the *Earth*; I walk the Regions of the Dead, and, more than a Chemist, extract Life and Spirit from Dust, Bones, and Putrefaction. I examine the Beds of the Metals, and trace the *Gold* in its first Seedings, and the *Diamond* on its Rock, crusted over with Earth, and enrich myself with them in a better Manner than they who dig for them, and proudly call them their own. I trace the *Fountain* to its Original, and solace myself with its living Waters. If I walk
in

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- * Where'er we fix or turn our wand'ring Eyes,
Around, on ev'ry Side, fresh Objects rise;
A Field of Contemplation meets our View,
For ever pleasing, innocent, and new.
Brown's Universe

in my *Garden*, I not only survey the *Rose*, but, by Contemplation, the wondrous Hand of the divine Artificer, and learn to *blush* that I have paid him a Love and Adoration so low and feeble. The delicate Paint and the refreshing Odours of the *Rose* and other Flowers, all arising from an unsightly Root, wrapt up in Earth, and extracting Moisture from it, lead me to admire him, who, by a vast and unsearchable Wisdom, raises such a *Variety* of Vegetables, so very different in *Aspect*, *Smell*, *Taste*, *Bulk*, and *Virtue*, from the same *Clod*; who animates them by the same *Sun*, refreshes them by the same *Dews*, produces them every one in its own Month, renews the Face of the Earth every Year, preserves the numerous *Species* without the Interposition of human Aid, provides every Room of his great House, I mean every distinct Country, with a various Set of Furniture, and yet all such as illustriously evince and display his Workmanship. If I am moved to approve the Gardener's *Discretion*, *Care*, and *Fancy*, in cultivating, arranging, mingling, protecting, and cherishing the several Productions of his little Spot, with what Astonishment am I led to the great Creator, supreme Manager, and, if I may be allowed the Expression, so far as it imports skilful, tender, and unwearied Care, Gardener of universal Nature. Every Pot of *Auriculas* and *Carnations*, every Bed of *Tulips*, every Border of *Pinks*, every *Jessamine* and *Woodbine* climbing up the Wall, not only regale my Senses, but, by a secret Finger, point upward to the *Power* who made them. While I stand gazing upon

upon them one by one, and single out their peculiar Excellencies, I hear them speak articulately and loudly, and in a most pleasing *Harmony* utter forth the Praises of their Creator.

Thou, tho' invisible art ever seen!
 And seen in All! the *Great*, and the *Minute*:
 Each Globe above with its gigantic Race,
 Each Flow'r, each Leaf, with its small People
 swarm'd,
 To the first Thought that asks "*from whence?*"
 declare
 Their common Source. Young.

BUT though I thus stop in the Garden, I only designed to pass through it to the *Corn-Fields*; I mean, I took my Pen in Hand, to tell you what occurred in my recent Walks, and what Entertainment I received from the late *Harvest*.

INDEED there is not a *Month* passes, but I find in some Sense an *Harvest*; I gather from the Meads rich Stores of Knowledge. *Contemplation* I may call a *philosophic Hot-bed*. It matures the Fields in an Instant; in one Hour I bear away full *Blossoms* and ripe *Fruit*, from what I found no better than a mere *Clod*. But I must own in the Month of *August* I fetch in a peculiar Abundance. Without wronging the Owners, I collect and lay up large *Sheaves*, and fill my Store-houses with delicious Fruits, as if plucked from the *lower Boughs* of the Tree of Life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.

I HAD often with Wonder before traced Nature in its *Nursery*, even from the Time that the Corn bursts the *Womb*: How often was I pleased to see the Manner in which it operated? When I saw it covered with *Snow*, I looked upon it as wrapped with the Infant in its Mother's *Mantle*, and thus defended from the most keen, inclement, and long-continued Frosts. How often did gentle Nature *suckle* its feeble Offspring with Dews, and warm it with her nurturing Fire, till at length it got out of its Minority, and ripened into an Harvest. Herein I find an Emblem of God's People, and of what he does for them. How long is Grace ripening for Glory? Small at first as a Seed, nay, as the *Mustard-seed*, the smallest of all Seeds, who would imagine to see such a Stalk and such Fruit from such an *inconsiderable Beginning*? Much more, who would expect to see that poor, mean, feeble Christian a perfect Saint in Glory? Now he is in a *Cottage*, perhaps on a *Dungbill*, hereafter on a *Throne*! Now his Graces are so imperfect and inactive, that it is not easy many Times to determine whether there are any; and yet even these shall produce something beyond Conception great and glorious.

AMONG other Things observable, I may take Notice that *Grace* is a *Seed*; and that, though small, it has a *Principle of Life* in it: This makes it highly valuable. As there is a Tendency in every Seed to *Multiplication*, and thus to produce an Harvest, so there is in *Grace* a Tendency to-
wards

wards the Production of *Glory*. Let but the Seed be placed in a proper *Nidus* or Bed, and its Nature will soon discover itself; it expands, shoots down its *Radicle*, and emits its *Blade*. And, though there is a great Difference between Things *Natural* and *Divine*, yet Grace, when the immortal Seed is cast into the Soul, will be found to be a Principle of *Life*; it operates and will discover itself under proper Influence, and it still tends forwards to the Growth of perfect Holiness, and therefore it is called the *First-fruits*, and the *Earnest* of the most sublime Felicity. How inestimable, viewed in this Light, is the *lowest* Degree of *sanctifying* and *transforming* Grace! there is a Life begun which shall never be destroyed: the Heights of Bliss inconceivable and everlasting are *seminally* wrapt up in the first Beginnings of the new Creation, as the wide-spreading *Oak* is inclosed in the minute *Acorn*. Let us therefore, my Friend, make it more than a Matter of *common* Concern, that the Change which passes upon us is indeed the *saving* Change, a *passing from Death to Life*; that an all-sufficient *Jehovah*, through *Jesus* the Mediator, is chosen as our Felicity and End; that Heaven is the superior Object of our Choice and Pursuit; and that there is none in Heaven or Earth, whom we love, admire, and adore in Comparison of our God, nor any whose Image or Favour we desire in Competition with his Likeness and Love: How excellent and well ordered is the new Covenant in this Respect? how safe are those who are surrounded

by everlasting Arms? how happy they, for whom *Cbrist* prays that their Faith may not fail, since he never prays in vain? how sure are the Promises of one that cannot lie? how much is the Honour of the great Shepherd engaged to preserve those Sheep, for whom he has undertaken, and that of the sacred in-dwelling Spirit, to maintain and compleat the Work his own gracious and omnipotent Hand hath wrought, and to continue his Residence in the Soul, into which he first entered from the Freeness of his Mercy?

THIS Wheat, which I see housed this Day so joyfully, how long did it stand exposed to Dangers and Disasters? how tedious a Winter did it pass through? If at one Time the *Sun* seemed to *nourish* it at its warm Bosom, at other Times *Frosts* seemed to be *killing* it; the severest Storms blew over it; Lightnings I feared were commissioned to blast it; its Fences were but slight to keep off the Foot that would crush it, and the Jaws that would devour it; and yet it is preserved to this joyful Day! In this Respect, methinks it is an Emblem of the Heir of Glory. How many and severe his Afflictions? the Lord loves him, but how mysterious is the divine Affection? he designs him for a bright celestial Crown, and yet, with *David*, after he was anointed by *Samuel*, he seems to be an *Out-cast*! But Winter is necessary: the Farmer will tell me, that without these Frosts he can expect but a slender Harvest; he finds that the more the springing Blade is checked, the better it fastens and spreads in the

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the Ground; and that thus it is prepared to bear the future Beams of the warm Spring: He says, that by the Rigours of the *Brumal Air*, the *Weeds* are destroyed, which would otherwise crowd the Soil, draw off its cherishing Sap, and entangle and oppress the rising *Stalk*. And may not many a Christian, when he looks back and traces the Dispensations of Providence say with the Royal Psalmist, *In very Faithfulness thou hast afflicted me**. May they not reflect upon their rising *Pride* as checked by a seasonable Trial? May they not call their *Losses* in the World their better *Gains*? were not their Souls more rooted and grounded in Judgment and Affection, and did they not prove more rich in Experience by their many and long Disappointments? Were they not loosened from the Creature, by seeing its Vanity, and feeling it to be a *bruised Reed*, and were they not brought to make the Lord more eminently their Trust, even the most High their Habitation? and thus were they not only bettered by a Series of Sorrows while they were felt, but was not the Habitude of their Souls spiritualized, and by having seen so long *an End of all Perfection*, were they not prepared for the softer and more delicate Season of worldly Prosperity? “O thou great Husbandman, I am in thy Hand, and rejoice that I am in thy *skilful*, “*gracious* Hand: Thou knowest my Make, and “in all Respects what is and shall be best: Appoint my Seasons, allot my Circumstances, and “order and proportion my Comforts and

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“Crosses

* Psalm cxix. 75.

" Crosses; if Afflictions are necessary, I refuse
 " them not; I know they will not be joyous
 " but grievous, and I feel Sense ready to retract
 " my Prayer; but I renew my Petition. The
 " Flesh shrinks at the Prospect, much more
 " when it feels Affliction; but I have a *nobler*
 " Interest to regard, and I would weigh Matters
 " in the Balance of Faith. If Afflictions come,
 " let them be in Mercy: Let them be the Fruits
 " of thy peculiar Care; let them be *protracted*,
 " *limited, mitigated*, as seems best to that Wis-
 " dom that never errs; let *Supports* be propor-
 " tioned to the *Pressure*, *Cordials* to my *Faint-*
 " *ings*, *Grace* to my *Temptations*, and let the
 " Spirit of Wisdom and Holiness inforce the
 " Providential Arguments, that they may come
 " with a salutary Power and a real Efficacy to
 " my Soul."

THIS Corn in its Growth seemed to stand
 strangely exposed and in Danger, not only from
 Frosts loaded with Nitre, and Storms full of
 Fury, but also from Beasts of Prey; and yet it
 lived and stood its Ground, till removed by the
 Hand of its Proprietor, and fitted for his Use.
 But the infantile Graces of the Christian shall,
 thro' the Divine Mercy and Truth, more certainly
 abide in the midst of all the Schemes and At-
 tempts of his malicious Foes. The roaring Lion,
 the Bulls of *Basban*, Enemies from Earth and
 Hell are in Confederacy, and yet the Redeemed
 of the Lord get safe to the Heavenly *Sion*. in
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Spight of all. An invisible, paternal *Eye* is over them, a guardian *Power* surrounds them;

A feeble Saint shall win the Day,
Tho' Sin and Hell obstruct the Way.

How often have I seen the Whirlwind, as it were, collect all its Force, and sweep over the Field, as if it envied the Growth of the rising Crop, as if it were resolved to lay it flat no more to rise, and even to make its Womb its Grave, and yet it has kept its Root, and so kept it, Standing. Sometimes, indeed, it hath stooped for a short Season, but in a little Time it hath recovered its former Uprightness. Methinks this Circumstance puts me in Mind of the Christian at his worst Time; *cast down but not destroyed*; oppressed, perhaps, in his Graces, through the Violence of the Enemy, and yet, since *as his Day*, such is the Strength communicated from above, he wonderfully recovers himself. The Whispers of the Divine Spirit come with Power, he recollects his Carriage, Shame reddens his Countenance, he laments his Loss, calls to Mind his Ingratitude, and charges himself with Folly, and Ignorance more than brutish. Adore, O my Soul, for ever and most fervently adore him who has formed the *new Covenant*; who hath stored it with Promises, put it into the Hand of a glorious *Mediator*, and engaged all the Divine Perfections in Alliance, and all in Favour of a poor Saint. He is the Member, the Spouse, the Sheep, the Branch of *Christ*, and so shall not miscarry.

miscarry. Triumph, O my Soul in the Grace in which thou standest: Hast thou not fled to this Covenant, and repeated thy Flight by renewing thy Solemn Acts of Faith in the all-sufficient, kind, and faithful Redeemer, the Merit of his Death and Righteousness, his living Care, and affectionate Steadiness? Hast thou not ventured on the Promises, and here embarked all thine Immortal Concerns? And will the Saviour shake thee off, while hanging upon him, especially when thou reliefst upon his encouraging Invitation? Can he forget his own Word? Can he drop his saving Purpose? Can he deny or reverse his own Promise? That were to *deny himself**; that cannot be the Act of one who *magnifies his Word above all his Name*†. Shall I not then esteem myself safe in his Hands? And, though Death and the Powers of Hell combine, as a Frown from my Lord can baffle them, a Smile upon my Soul shall cheer me in my darkest Fears.

IN these Arms of Almighty Love I doubt not but you are encircled, and have been lodged a considerable Time: There I trust you are kept safe. How often have I heard you humbly triumph in the blessed Situation, and, with Prostration of Soul, offering Praise to him who provided the strong Hold, opened the Way in the Gospel, pointed it out to you, and, while your Fears as a guilty Creature drove you, kindly and effectually drew you with the Bonds of his Love. In

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* 2 Tim. ii. 13.

† Psalm cxxxviii. 2.

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those everlasting Embraces of Love and Power I
doubt not Death will find you, and be the Mes-
senger of eternal Salvation. To those guardian
Arms be often committing your Friend too, and
believe me to be, good Sir,

Yours in our common Lord, &c.

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LETTER VII.

On the HARVEST.

DEAR SIR,

HAD I not been apprehensive you would have thought me tedious, I should have gone some Steps farther, while I was attempting to communicate to you my Contemplations on the *Harvest*. But since you are so good-natured as to relieve me from those Fears, I am emboldened to take my Pen in Hand a second Time, and without any more Apologies proceed.

How *slowly* did I see the Grain ripen? How often did I wish to see it safely housed? But I find it was best that Nature should take its own Time. The Event of Things often convinces us of our former Folly, while we dared to mark a Path for the Divine Wisdom to walk in, and were for prescribing Methods to Providence. And have I not often wondered to see the Life of many a good Man lengthened out, when to be dissolved, and to be with *Christ* would be much better? Especially have I been struck with Astonishment when I have not only seen his Heaven delayed, but his Person, by the Decays of Age and mental Faculties, sunk into gloomy Darkness. “Why, cried I, is the Vision so long

“ deferred?

“ deferred? Why does not their Lord come and
 “ remove his endangered Favourites to his own
 “ Garner? Does he not love them? And yet he
 “ leaves them; leaves them to bear the scorch-
 “ ing Sun and the beating Rain. Would it not
 “ be better for them to receive the End of their
 “ Faith, to have their Days of Trial accomplish-
 “ ed, and the Crown put upon their Heads?”

But I withdraw my Complaint now: If they may ripen for Glory by the Means, is it not best they should stand longer? If they may shine in their Graces as so many Stars to the Honour of their God and Redeemer, and if they may be Instruments of Conversion and Edification, and so may be greatly useful to their Families, Neighbours, and the Church of God, is not an important End answered? Again, if they themselves may shine brighter for evermore in the Realms of Bliss, by having their Graces polished, refined, and strengthened by a further Exercise, is it not worth their while to stay a little longer abroad, in Consideration of such a future Advantage? Be you therefore patient, my Brother, though the Lord postpones your Heaven for a Season. What he is doing for you and by you, you know not the Reason of now so well, *but you shall know hereafter* *. You have received the *early*, perhaps you are yet to receive the *latter* Rain †. *Be patient therefore, and establish your Heart, for the Coming of the Lord draweth nigh.*

I TOOK

* John xiii. 7.

† James v. 7.

I TOOK Notice, while I was visiting the various Quarters of the Field in which I was walking and musing, that *all* was not good Grain that was under my Eye, and soon to be cut down. How many Weeds were there that occupied the Place of the Wheat, and were mingled with it? This soon put me in Mind of the State of Christians, who have indeed received the Grace of God. In such the immortal Seed is sown by the Hand of the Divine Spirit; but Corruptions, as so many Tares, are the Natives, the spontaneous Productions of the Soil; and as they rise up without Culture, so they are hasty in their Growth, and a Nuisance to their Neighbours*. Ah, my Soul! how great and melancholy is thy Experience upon this Head? How often has the Consideration shed a Gloom over thee, and made thee deeply pensive? And how frequently and pathetically hast thou carried thy Case to him who is able to help? Again, let me learn of the sagacious Husbandman how to deal with these base Lusts: Shall he take Pains in clearing his Fields, in cutting down some, and eradicating other Weeds, and will he do this as soon as may be, even in the early Spring, and shall I not exercise a superior Care, as my Plantation is much more valuable,

* Thy malignant Seed

In an ill Hour, and by a fatal Hand
 Sadness diffus'd o'er Virtue's gleby Land,
 With rising Pride amidst the Corn appear,
 And choak the Hopes and Harvest of the Year.
Prior.

valuable, and my Weeds much more dangerous? Let me keep my Eye narrowly fixed upon my spiritual Husbandry, survey frequently every Part of it, and check my rising Vanities in their first Appearance, before they blossom and bring forth Fruit in actual Sins, such as dishonour God, brand my Profession, pollute my Heart, break my Peace, and weaken the holy Habit of my Soul.

IF the Husbandman's *numerous* Weeds many Times are owing to the *Meanness* of the Soil, and disappear insensibly upon better *Culture* and a *richer* Manure; know, O my Soul, that this is thy very Case. A thousand *Vanities*, like the painted Flowers of an *impoverished* Corn-field, spring up in thee, because thou art not more frequently and seriously exercised in the great Duties of Religion. If thou, O my carnal Mind, art more steadily employed in studying the Word, in pausing upon the Contents of the blessed Gospel, in ardent Prayer, in Attempts to do Good to those who are round about thee, and the like, how soon will the Face of Things be changed for the better? Though many Things may still remain, which will be Matter of Regret and Shame to thee, yet under the Influence of celestial Dews, thou wilt find thyself more ready to every good Thought, and the Exercise of every Grace, with whatever tends to the Honour of God, the Increase of the Divine Life, and the delightful, profitable, and purifying Converse with the Glories of the Eternal World.

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THE State of this Field, of every Field, is an Emblem not only of the Christian himself, but of the World, the Christian World. Our Saviour in the Parable of the *Tares**, has given us to expect what will be the State of Things till the Judgment of the great Day; that the Wicked will be found mingled with the People of God, and Hypocrites with the real Followers of the Lamb. There grows the flaming *Poppy*, the Emblem of the forward, formal Professor; in Externals a zealous Christian, perhaps by his Gifts he *shines* in the Eyes of those who are near him; but with regard to internal Savour and Power he is nothing. He is a mere *Poppy*, for he has a shewy Outside, without any other Property than that of Drowziness and Stupefaction.

THERE grows the *Hemlock*†, noxious and baleful; there also the *deadly Nightshade*‡, malignant and poisonous! And O how often when we walk the Streets may we be put in Mind of them, by open and notorious Sinners? They distil and scatter their *venomous* Juice by their *Oaths* and *Excretions*, by their *Drunkenness*, *Lies*, and *Injustice*. They dishonour God, are a Nuisance to Mankind, and shed an infectious Taint upon *the Many* they converse with. Their Example is abominable, their Profanation of every Thing that is sacred is daring, and the Defiance they bid the Divine Omnipotence and Justice is to the last Degree shocking. The great Proprietor of the Field

* Mat. xiii. 24 — 31,

† *Solanum lethale*.

‡ *Cicuta vulgaris*.

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Field *permits* them to stand for a Season. Sometimes indeed he will, with an angry but just Repentment, pluck them up by the Roots, cast them to the Dunghil, or commit them to the devouring Flame; and this to intimidate others, and preserve the sacred Veneration of his Holiness in the World. But for the most Part, *long* is the Day of his Patience towards them, and amazingly long, when I consider his unspotted Purity, his absolute Hatred of Sin, and his unopposable Power to punish it; but this is the *Time of his gracious Forbearance*, and wherein he will display his long-suffering Goodness, referring his awful Proceedings against them to the Judgment of the great decisive Day.

THERE stands the lordly *Thistle*! See in what a stately Manner he rears his haughty Head! he overtops the Harvest, and yet is not only *useless*, but *pernicious*; but notwithstanding his proud Appearances he must soon be levelled by the Sickle to the Ground, and trodden under Foot of Men. Methought this over-grown armed Weed resembled the Men of the World, who would be thought something, while yet they are the very Sons of *Belial*, not only devoid of every good Quality, but, like *Thistles*, vexatious to those who are about them. The Persecutor terrifies and torments, but it is only for a Season, and that but short. Lo! the Sickle, the Instrument of Destruction is near at Hand: And let him know that he shall certainly, notwithstanding his Power and Pride, *be cut down as the Grass, and wither as the green*

green Herb *. Let us then, my Friend, *not fret at Evil doers, nor be envious at the Workers of Iniquity* † God is wise in permitting them to stand, and he *will be righteous in taking Vengeance* ‡. At this awful Hour, when gentle and intreating *Patience* will cease its Struggles to withhold the brandished Sword of flaming Vengeance, when the infinitely strong and extended Arm of Justice shall wield the burnished Weapon of Divine Wrath, and deal out Destruction equal to the Sinner's Demerits, where, O my Soul, *where shall the ungodly and the Sinner appear* §?

OTHER Weeds I took Notice of, which tho' they did not lift up their Heads so high, nor appear so eminent, yet were exceedingly pernicious to the Crop. There was peculiarly the *Bind-weed* ||, that *insidiously* crept along the Ground, without Observation entwined itself around the slender Corn, silently brought it down, and destroyed the Increase. Does it not resemble some among us, who, though they do not openly persecute the Excellent of the Earth, nor avowedly put all Religion to a Defiance, yet *clandestinely* entice into Bye-Paths, and do infinite Damage to the Objects of the Church's Hopes? I mean such peculiarly who *lie in wait to deceive* ¶, sap the Foundations of Christianity and its capital Truths, stop up, turn aside, or poison the Waters of the Sanctuary, throw the most false and prejudicing Constructions upon important Doctrines, represent

* Psalm xxxvii. 2. † Ver. 1. ‡ Rom. iii. v.
§ 1 Pet. iv. 18. || Convolvula. ¶ Eph. iv. 14.

sent them in a most offensive Dress, and so shake the Faith of Souls. And, where Profaneness is attended with Wit and Good-nature, how dangerous is it to associate with such Persons in *Neighbourhood, Diversions, daily Conversation, or Alliance in Marriage?* Some of the Grain I found entirely *ruined* by such an Intimacy; and other Part of it, though stronger, was greatly *injured*, and not only lost much in Point of Height and Beauty, but, upon Examination, a large Degree of its *solid Worth and Fatness*: O how miserably light did I find it? The Lord have Mercy upon those who are most in Danger, and particularly rescue my *young Friends*, where Vigour of Constitution, Love to Ingenuity, Strength of Passion and a Tincture of Self-conceit, are joined with *Immaturity* of Judgment.

It may not be amiss to remark what Pleasure I took in surveying the State of some Fields, which I had known before an open Common, a dreary Waste, unprofitable to their Owner, producing nothing which turned to any Account, no Food for Man, nor Fodder for Beast; but now they are inclosed by the Hedge of Protection, and broken up by Labour, now the useless Thorns are removed, the Surface of the Ground is burnt, proper Manure is scattered and mingled, and Seed is cast into them, they produce a rich Abundance; the Owner rejoiced in the Success of his Endeavours, and many with myself have joined in the pleasing Contemplation. Was it unnatural, if I was hereby reminded of the happy Case of *eminent*

pent Converts, before over-run with Iniquity, but now the admired Instances of Divine Grace! Did I know them, mourn over them and for them, bathe them with Tears of Lamentation, and carry them as the most melancholy Objects to the Divine Footstool? I now embrace them with exceeding Joy; I adore the Grace, which has wrought this happy Change, and herein I know I join with Angels, who from a perfect Love to God, Similarity to the Divine Nature, and the most disinterested Benignity of Disposition, rejoice abundantly in such holy and happy Events, in which the Glory of God and the Felicity of their Fellow-creatures are so nearly concerned, and many Times that God, who is rich in Mercy, and designs a beautiful Field and plentiful Crop, makes use of very rough Methods in recovering Souls to himself; he breaks them with Breach upon Breach, scorches them with the *Fire of Affliction*, and, like the Husbandman, ploughs, cross-ploughs them, and repeats the Operation. All this while the *Spirit* goes along with the needful Severity. Thus the Ear is opened to Discipline, as the Clods of the Valley are opened by the Instruments and Labour of the Countryman, and as * *before they were afflicted they went astray, so now they learn to keep God's Word*. How readily does the Soul, humbled by the *Rod*, receive that Word, which before it kicked against rebelliously, perhaps *scorned* contemptuously? the Sceptre of *Jesus* is bowed to with Obedience, and presenting a Blank to the Redeemer and

* Psalm cxix. 67.

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and Sovereign of Souls, it says, "*Lord, what wilt thou have me to do**?" And when Divine Grace has wrought the Change, eradicated the Weeds softened the Obduracy of the Heart, and sown it with the Seeds of Righteousness, and these Seeds spring up and flourish, how beautiful does the Soul appear? It is indeed, as a *watered Garden, and a Field which the Lord hath blessed*. He who is the original Proprietor, and of late the *New-creator*, rejoices in the Work of his own Hand. And how signal, how glorious is the Change, could we clearly discern it, could we carefully trace it? That Heart cheerfully lifts up and opens its everlasting Doors to *Christ*, which were before rebelliously shut and barred against the King of Glory. That Neck which was as an *Iron Sinew*, stiff and relentless, bows affectionately under the Yoke of *Jesus*. Those *Feet*, which were swift to carry the Sinner to any Place, Business, or Company of Vanity or Sin, now carry him to the Society of the Faithful and the Congregation of the Saints. That *Tongue*, which uttered Blasphemies and Lies, is employed in speaking for God, in supplicating the Divine Mercy and Grace, and singing forth their Praises. Those *Hands*, which were the Instruments of Theft and Oppression, are now employed in honest Labours, and the Support of the Needy. He who wasted his *Riches* to make Provision for the Flesh, and to fulfil the Lusts thereof, honours God with his Substance.

* Acts ix. 6.

Substance. How many feel the sweet and salutary Effects of the wonderous Alteration? He labours to shed, like the rising Sun, a benevolent Influence upon all around him. Religion implanted in the Heart, breaks down the Hedge of carnal *Selfishness*, and he lives to the Benefit of all near him, far as his Powers can extend. He studies how to fill up every Relation aright; his Household is a Nursery for God and Heaven; and the Voice of Supplication, and devotional Praise, and Reading the Word may be found, where nothing was to be seen or heard, but Vanity and Vice.

I LIFTED up my Soul hereupon in affectionate Joy, and intreated that he, who hath the Hearts of all in his Hands, would, as the great Husbandman, take all the barren Wastes around me under his wise and gracious Management; that the *Wildernesses may become Edens, and our Deserts as the Garden of the Lord **, and that they may join with the Author of the following delightful Lines †.

When with my Mind devoutly press'd,
Dear Saviour! my revolving Breast,
Would past Offences trace;
Trembling I make the black Review,
Yet pleas'd behold, admiring too,
The Pow'r of changing Grace.

This Tongue, which Blasphemies defil'd,
These Feet, to erring Paths beguil'd,

* Isai. li. 3.

† See Mr. Moses Browne's Poems.

In heav'nly League agree;
 Who could believe such Lips could praise,
 Or think my dark and winding Ways
 Should ever lead to thee?

These Eyes that once abus'd their Sight,
 Now list to thee their watry Light,
 And weep a silent Flood;
 These Hands ascend in ceaseless Pray'r;
 O wash away the Stains they wear,
 In pure redeeming Blood.

These Ears that pleas'd could entertain
 The Midnight Oath, the lustful Strain
 When round the festal Board,
 Now deaf to all th' enchanting Noise,
 Avoid the Throng, detest the Joys,
 And press to hear thy Word.

Thus art thou serv'd in ev'ry Part;
 O wouldst thou but transform my Heart,
 That drossy Thing refine;
 That Grace might Nature's Strength controul,
 And a new Creature--- Body --- Soul,
 Be, Lord, for ever thine.

I CANNOT leave this Topic of Reflection, without adding, that this may be an Encouragement to Parents and others to take Pains with the Ignorant, the Profane, the Careless, and the Stupid: God alone indeed can give Eyes to see, and Ears to hear; but where faithful Attempts are made, and carried on with Seriousness and Dili-

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gence,

gence, and fervent Supplication is conjoined, who knows what Success may follow?*

AND yet I cannot forbear remarking, that there was at least one Spot of Ground, which was an Exception. It was surrounded with Fruitfulness, but was itself as barren, as if excluded the Benefit of the first Benediction †. I enquired the Reason; I asked if no Care had been taken of it, whether it was never broken up or dressed; and was assured nothing had been wanting on the Part of the Husbandman, either in Point of Expence or Labour; nay, that these had been repeated Year after Year, but all in vain; that Fern ‡ and Rushes, Thistles and Weeds had been the *whole* of the Harvest, and always frustrated the Fatigues, Cares, and Hopes of its Master. A sad Emblem, thought I, of too many, whose Parents had instructed, cautioned, exhorted, and encouraged, but all to no purpose; to whom Ministers had cried aloud, and had not spared; who had been exercised with a Variety of Providences; and yet by Reason of the Rockiness of the Heart, the Frowardness of the Disposition, and the Rankness of Corruptions, nothing was produced to the Honour of God, or the Welfare of the Soul; these secure Sinners remaining still averse to Things which relate to their real Peace and their everlasting Advantage. Justly does

* Nemo adeo ferus est, qui non mitescere possit
Si modo culturæ patientem præbeat aurem. *Hor.*

† Gen. i. 11.

‡ Neglectis urenda Flix innascitur agris. *Hor.*

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does God who always judgeth righteous Judgment, pronounce that *these miry Places and Marshes shall not be healed, but given to Salt* *.

THIS, my dear Friend, how gloomy soever in itself, is a *Shade* enhancing the *Lustre* of your Family, which is not only a *Seminary* of Virtue and Piety, but the *Picture* of *Fruitfulness*. Happy House! where Parents so *steadily* lead the Way, and Children are so *readily* and *cheerfully* following after in the Paths of Religion! Where *Instruction* and *Example* from Governors speak the same Language, and are entirely *harmonious*, and their young Offspring yield an obedient Ear. That thus it may be in all the Families around us and in yours and mine, while any subsist that descend from us, ought ever to be the Prayer of, Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

* Ezech. xlvii. 11.

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LETTER VIII.

On the HARVEST.

DEAR SIR,

IF while I am writing upon the Harvest, my Observations are common, you know, in devotional and practical Writings, it is not expected so much that new Thoughts should be started, as that what are well known may be more intimately applied and better improved. If you should be ready to complain that they are abrupt and unconnected, be pleased to remember, that I have lately been among the Gleaners of the Field, who picked up one Ear in this Place and another in that, and made at length an *Handful* of those Stalks that lay scattered at a Distance before. And if you think proper to number me among the Poor of the Land who are thus employed, I shall, I hope, be satisfied, if in the whole I may bring my little Sheaf, and add a small Pittance to your Store.

How valuable and necessary soever the Produce of this Earth in its annual Harvests is, it is worthy of our Observation *from what* it is derived: And however the Commonness of the Thing may cause us to overlook it, here is a Circumstance which may raise our devout Wonder to

him,

him, who by the Means thereof, *giveth us our Corn in its Season*. I do not mean now so much the despicable Clod under our Foot, as the various Matter made Use of in a Way of *Manure*. I trust, instead of taking Offence at what I may mention upon such an Occasion, though in itself never so indelicate, you will view the Wisdom and Goodness of the God of Providence in the stronger Light. Next to the fertilizing Dews and Rains which every Year moisten the Earth, and those Stores of Nitre which in minute Particles are ever floating in the Air, carried about by the Winds, and imbibed by the Glebe, there are many Things contrived to give a renewed Fatness to the Ground, and repair its exhausted prolific Vigour. Of these Things some are in every other View worthless and contemptible, and others very fetid and offensive; and yet in the Hand of God, that wise and wondrous *Chemi*st, they are so mixed, dissolved, and strained as to effect the most benign Purposes. What more despicable than filthy old Rags, Malt-dust, and rotten Wood? What more unpromising in themselves, and disagreeable to us, than the Dung of Animals, Soot from the Chimney, and the Sweepings of the Streets, and yet it is well known, these Things produce golden Harvests? Things which are a Nuisance to the Eye and to the Nostrils, and which, if not buried, might infect the Air, and produce fatal Sickneses, must be removed, and that is a kind Hand which covers them, and prevents their mixing with the circumambient Fluid we are continually breathing;

but that the Offscouring of all Things should, by a proper Disposition, be a Means, in a skilful Hand, of loading our Earth with plentiful Crops, is indeed very surprizing. Hence it is that thousands of our Acres yield a large Increase, which otherwise must lie perpetually uncultivated and an useless Waste. I admire thy Hand, whose is the Earth and its Fulness, that extracts the Staff of Life, and the choicest Liquors the Vine and Barley yield, from the vilest Drains and Refuse of our Earth. And were I to turn my Eye to the nicer Produce of the Garden, the Observation would be the same: The imperial *Nectarine*, the delicious *Apple*, the juicy *Pear*, the luscious *Melon*, are obliged to the Stable and the Street for their Manure. Vaunt not thy self, O thou vain Epicure, but humbly see whence thou springest, and how thou art maintained: For what is thy well-made and well-dressed Body, but a Clod of Earth wonderfully fashioned, hollowed, and painted by a curious Hand? And what is thine animated Clay every Day recruited by, but another Clod impregnated with that, which, in its natural State, thou wouldst have turned away from with the utmost Disgust. Let us then learn such a Lesson as this, “Despise nothing, be
 “thankful for all, and keep an Eye to him,
 “who can both in the natural and moral World
 “bring Good out of Evil;” and, if we are Persons given to Appetite, let this Thought moderate the eager Relish.

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Look on Meat, think it Dust, then eat a Bit:
And say withal, "Dust to Dust, I cominit."

Herbert.

THE Divine Wisdom and Goodness are discovered as to the Wheat. This the most precious Produce the Earth can boast of, stands the Force of Storms many and violent, through all the Winter Months. Is it not then a merciful Appointment of Providence, that a Vegetable on which our Preservation so much depends, should not, as most other Seeds would, be destroyed by the alternate Seasons, but endure a Flood of Moisture at one Time, and severe and long-continued Frosts at another?

THE Provision which the great Author of Nature has made for the *sure* Propagation of this Plant is wonderful. After the outward Membrane of the Seed, in which all is wrapped up, is broken by the Moisture of the Soil and the Energy of that Life which lies latent there, the first Thing which discovers itself is the *Radicle*, the Root of the future Plant; this shoots downward in a *perpendicular* Direction, and very soon comes the little Stem; at the same Time almost Nature sends forth two other little Roots, which extend themselves *horizontally*, or in a Direction somewhat parallel to the Surface of the Ground. All these Roots are at first nourished by the putrified Body of the Seed, which is wrapt up round about them. As they strengthen, they appear to be hairy, that is a great Number of Fibres shoot

out from the little Roots, all which have their minute Tubes patent to receive Moisture, and so to convey Nourishment. So that the Infant-Corn is soon fed by more than five hundred Mouths. As Vegetation proceeds, the Grain is not content with one set of Roots, but Nature provides more. Gradually the Number greatly increases, especially if any Thing checks the Progress of the Stem, so that the tender Mass within does not spend itself that Way. For this Reason the thoughtful Husbandman is not displeased that his Wheat should appear short above Ground, because he expects by this Means it takes a more kindly Rooting beneath. But is it not still more Wonder, that from so small a Body as a common Grain of Wheat, should arise such a Multitude of Stems? when planted by itself, or at such a Distance from Neighbours, as not to be incommoded in the fertile Moisture it would attract, more than Twenty, nay Thirty, I may say Forty, have thus risen from one Parent Seed; yea, there have been Instances where more than Fifty have been numbered, Brethren of the same Family*. Now suppose each of these Stalks produce Thirty Grains, how great the Increase? And when 1500 Grains come to be thus planted abroad in the same Manner, tho' every one is not

* *Pliny*, in his Natural History, tells that one of *Augustus's* Procurators sent him Four Hundred Ears, all produced from the same Seed; and *Nero* had Three Hundred and Forty Ears sent him, arising also from one Seed. See *Chambers's* Dictionary, under the Word FERTILITY.

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not so fruitful, yet it is certain that a *Province* may be in a very few Years changed from an howling Wilderness into an *Eden*; and all from the smallest Beginnings.

As the Plant rises above the Ground, it strengthens in Proportion. And here it is surprising to see how many Integuments it is invested with, in order to preserve it from the surrounding Cold; and, when the various Parts are grown stronger, and the Weather more mild, these Defences slowly fall off, one after another, the End of their Formation being completely answered.

THE very Structure of the Stem-Part carries in it the Footsteps of eminent Wisdom. It is proper it should be somewhat *tall*, that its Spike may be sufficiently elevated above the Earth, partly that the precious Treasure may not be exposed to the cold Vapours, which in the Evening arise from the Soil to a certain Height; partly that it may not be rotted by too much Moisture; and perhaps that the Juices from the Earth may be properly concocted by so long a Tube, and the many Secretions which lie in so long a Passage. But then how difficult to support a Vegetable to such a Height as five Foot, when it is not above the sixth Part of an Inch in Diameter? It must be so strong as to stand, and yet not so stubborn as to refuse to bow without breaking. Here its Contriver has wonderfully provided that it should be divided into several

Partitions, that each Part should be strengthened by a Knot, and that from each Knot should proceed a Tegument that shall preserve the Division above it. At each of these Knots I apprehend there may be peculiar Secretions of the nutritive Juice; and by the great Strength which lies in these Bands, the Stem is preserved from breaking, when under the Impression of the Winds, blowing from any Quarter. Thus the Growth of this important Vegetable takes Place; the canulous Part *only* appearing, till all Danger from the Winter's Cold is past; and when Summer Warmth sheds its balmy Influence, Providence intrusts the most precious Part, and for which the other Parts were disposed, to discover itself, I mean the Ear.

It is curious to behold the various Compartments, which are provided for every Individual of the Grains; the Distribution is equal, that every one of the little Family may have its proper Nourishment. Each hath a Membrane between it and the Stalk, and a twofold one outward, peculiarly to defend it where the greatest Hazard lies: And all are inclosed, as with a thorny Hedge, I mean the Beards, perhaps to keep off some minute Vermin. Perhaps the Whole of the Apparatus may preserve the precious Inclosure from opposite Inclemencies, the scorching Rays of the Sun, by which it may be shrunk up and withered before it is sufficiently filled; and too great a Lodgment of Dews whereby it might be rotted.

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Excuse me, dear Sir, if I have been too particular in this my Description. Works of Art often appear pompous, but sink in our Esteem the more nicely they are examined. Works of Nature, the more they are surveyed, appear with a noble Simplicity and astonishing Accuracy. I will now pass on; and we shall still see that which may direct our Eye upward.

THE *constant* Fertility of the Field through Ages and Generations is another Circumstance, which when attended to will excite our Gratitude to the great Disposer of all Things. All the Inhabitants on our Earth, and all the Vegetables produced by it, from the Cedar to the Hyssop, have an Old Age, which they cannot survive; and Longevity produces Feebleness and Inability to former Labour. Blessed be God, it is not so with the Earth on which we tread, and which is to maintain us all: Every Year it renews its Youth, like the Eagle. If properly broken by Labour, and cultivated, and fed, and now and then laid to rest, it regains its exhausted Strength, and is not weary of Well-doing. May my *Graces* too be suitably exercised, and put on a fresh Verdure continually: I would be always producing something to his Honour, who owns me, makes a Hedge about me, and feeds and dresses me with constant Expence. The Husbandman may think it best to change the Seed he sows; nay, alter the very Form of his Inclosures; he may turn the Pasture into Arable, or lay down his ploughed Fields into Pastures, but
still

still with an Eye to his own Profit, and they are ever obedient to the great Creator's Command, "*Be fruitful and multiply.*" Thus may it be with me, however it shall please my great Proprietor to dispose of me: After a Series of Years he may change the Course of his Dispensations; from full he may make me empty; or he may load me more plentifully with his providential Gifts; he may cast me into a different Neighbourhood or Acquaintance; he may call me out to a Service, which I was a Stranger to before: But O let me remember what my Business is, even to be fruitful; and may that Word ever sound in my Ear, and dwell upon my Heart, "*Herein is my heavenly Father glorified, that I bear much Fruit* *."

WHEN I view this rising, ripening *Harvest*, as the Gift of God, I would learn the Lesson of Gratitude and Praise to our annual Benefactor. But when I consider it, under Providence, as the Fruit of the Husbandman's Diligence, and the Repayment of his Seed committed to its Care, I would take Occasion hence to charge it upon myself, to be faithful to every *Trust* reposed in me. Is any Thing lent me, in one Shape or another? let it be forth-coming at the Season fixed. Is it to be repaid with proper Interest? let not that be wanting neither. Let those who have Kindnesses shown them in any Form, learn to requite Kindnesses in the same Way; or if that's impossible, in some other which is in their Power.

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* John xv. 8.

One Person may have *Wisdom* to advise; another may have *Strength* to labour; and a third, if he has not *Gold* to give, however must say it is his own Fault, if he has not an *Heart* to *pray* frequently and ardently for his Benefactor.

LET Children read their Lesson in the Furrow of the Field, as well as in other Books; and as they grow up in Life, learn (for it is the Divine Command) *to requite their Parents* *. It is true they may never be able to discharge the Debt, by making a thorough Requital for all that paternal *Tenderness* and *Anxiety*, which their *Infant-years* experienced, but let them be ready to own the *Obligation*, and make the most serious and steady Attempt to answer it: And let that Child be esteemed a Monster, who hath the *Comforts* of Life imparted by the Hand of the great Distributor of all, and has not an *Heart* to draw forth to a needy Parent. Let such be called a Violator of the Law †, and a Denier of the Faith of the Gospel ‡, and expect that some chosen Vengeance of the God of Heaven, either in this World or the World to come, will punish his unnatural Cruelty and Hardness of Heart.

AMONG many entertaining Prospects in the widely extended Corn-fields, one, which gave me an harmless Delight, was the *Impress* which the Winds made upon the standing *Grain*. How oft in my Walks have I made an *Halt*, and traced

* 1 Tim. v. 4.
 † 1 Tim. v. 8.

‡ Fifth Commandment.

traced the Gust in its Motion, and the varied Shades arising from the waving, bowing *Crop*, even as far as my Eyes could reach? I was pleased, not only as the Sight was agreeable in itself, but as I had many and many a Time considered it as an Emblem of that *ready* Obedience, which a Soul, under the special Influence of the Divine Spirit, pays to the Precepts of the blessed God; and especially as a Resemblance of those extraordinary Effusions of Grace, and that *general* Subjection consequent upon them, which will constitute the Glory of the latter Day. Now here and there a Sinner, ignorant, corrupt, foolish, and averse to God, is enlightened, and bowing before the Sceptre of Grace and Righteousness in the Hand of the exalted Mediator, cries out, "*Lord what wilt thou have me to do *?*" But, ah! the Generality are not only *deaf as the Adder*, but with her *stop their Ears against the Voice of the Chарmer †*. How glorious, my Friend, will be the Day, when the Sound of the Gospel shall be carried to every Land, and all *the Ends of the Earth shall see the Salvation of our God ‡*: When *Jesus* shall take to himself his great Power, and shall reign; when Converts shall be as the Dew-drops of the Morning §, and Nations be born at once; when the Church shall see Multitudes from every Quarter crowding into her, as Rivers into the Ocean, and shall with a joyful Surprise cry out, *Who are these that fly as the Clouds, and flock as Doves*
to

* Acts ix. 6. † Psalm lviii. 4. ‡ Isaiah lii.
10. § Psalm cx. 3.

to their Windows *. Blessed Season! when the Language of the Soul shall exactly and immediately eccho the Invitations of the Gospel, and the Temper and Conduct of the whole Man shall be a Counterpart to its sacred Precepts; and when the Individuals of the human Race, being first united to *Christ*, shall be brought nearer to one another in Affection. Will not such an Event turn most remarkably to the Glory of that Sovereignty, Holiness, and Grace, which are now little revered, nay even despised? Will it not be greatly to the Satisfaction of the Redeemer, when *he sees of the Travel of his Soul* †? Will not the Gospel, thus coming in its Glory, purify and refine the World, sunk into Corruption and Sensuality, more than all the Lectures of Philosophy ‡? O, Sir, could I speak to Thousands of Christians upon this Head, I would say, “*Ye who make mention of the Lord, keep not Silence;*”

* *Isaiah* lx. 8. † *Isaiah* liii. 11.

I.

‡ Where shall the Tribes of *Adam* find
The sov'reign Good to fill the Mind?
Ye Sons of moral Wisdom, show
The Spring whence living Waters flow.

II.

Say, will the *Stoic's* flinty Heart
Melt, and this cordial Juice impart?
Could *Plato* find these blissful Streams
Among his Raptures and his Dreams.

III.

Jesus our Kinsman, and our God,
Array'd in Majesty and Blood,
Thou art our Life; our Souls in thee
Possess a full Felicity.

Watts.

"lence* ; nay, give him no Rest till he make and
 "establish his Jerusalem a Praise in the whole
 "Earth †." To affect your Hearts, and rouse
 your drowsy Affections in Prayer, survey the de-
 plorable State of our World, a mere dreary
 Waste, an howling Wilderness, the usurped Em-
 pire of Satan, the *Bedlam of the Universe*, as Dr.
Young calls it, the very Suburbs of Hell. Let us
 join to intreat the Fulfilment of the divine Pre-
 dictions in their fullest Extent ; that Jesus and
 his Salvation may come down like the Rain on the
 new-mown Grass, as Showers that water the
 Earth ‡ ; that all that dwell in the Wilderness
 may bow before him § ; that Kings may bring Pre-
 sents and offer Gifts || ; that all such may fall down
 before him, and all Nations may serve him ¶ ; and
 that, though the Beginning of the Gospel in any
 Place may be as small and unpromising as the
 sowing of an Handful of Corn in the Earth upon
 the Top of an exposed, barren Mountain, yet the
 Product of the Gospel may be so great, that
 the Fruit thereof may shake like Lebanon **, in the
 Numbers, Zeal, and Eminence of Converts † †.

Tell

* Isaiah lxii. 6. † Verse 7. ‡ Psalm lxxii.
 6. § Verse 9. || Verse 10. ¶ Verse 11.
 ** Verse 16.

† † While I was musing upon these Things, I re-
 ceived a long and affecting Letter from the Reverend,
 Pious, and Laborious Mr. *John Brainerd*, that emi-
 nent Servant of Christ, employed as a Missionary a-
 mong the Heathen upon the Back of the *Jerseys*. He
 succeeds his Brother in his Work and Spirit. How
 dear should he be to every one who loves the Lord
Jesus Christ in Sincerity, and hath any Concern for
 the

Tell me not, base Unbelief, that the Thing is impossible, that opposing Difficulties are unsurmountable; *for what art thou, O great Mountain, before that Zerubbabel, who is King of his Church? when his Time is come, thou becomest a Plain?*
a Word

the Enlargement of his Kingdom, and the rescuing of Sinners out of the Jaws of Destruction? His Fatigues are vast! his Discouragements not a few! Though many of the *White*, in Confederacy with the *Tuw-nies*, join to prejudice the poor Creatures against the Gospel, and him for its Sake. God supports him, and Souls are won over to *Christ*. The Church, established by his Brother, keeps up, notwithstanding a great Mortality among them: The School consists of about Fifty Children, who are learning to read, write, work, and repeat the Assembly's Catechism; and one pious *Indian* Youth designed for the Ministry. But Help is wanting! I am ready to intreat all that read these Lines, to dwell upon the Thought, and ask themselves, whether they cannot forward this good Work with their *Prayers* and *Purses*! He wants a Companion, as *Barnabas* sought out *Paul*, to join with him. He wants more Money, by which his Fatigues would be lessened, and there would be more Probability of Success. Should these Papers answer no other good Purpose, but the quickening *British* Christians, who have Affection in their Hearts and Money in their Hands, to acquaint themselves more with so good a Work, and bestir themselves to forward it, I shall not esteem this Publication fruitless: And they may enquire of the Gentlemen in *London*, who belong to the Society in *Scotland* for propagating the Gospel; or of Mr. *De Berdt*, in *Artillery Court* near *Moorfields*.

N. B. A genuine Letter lately received from that Reverend Gentleman, giving an Account of his Successes and Difficulties, has been published, and may be had of Mr. *John Ward*, Bookseller, at the *King's-arms* in *Cornhill*, *London*, Price Two Pence.

a Word from him shall at once level thee*:
 Will that Arm but once awake, *that cut Rahab,*
that wounded the Dragon, dried the Sea, the Wa-
ters of the great Deep, and that made the Depths
of the Sea a Way for the Ransomed of the Lord to
pass over †, and we ask no more.

Jesus shall reign where'er the Sun
 Does his successive Journies run;
 His Kingdoms stretch from Shore to Shore,
 Till Moons shall wax and wane no more.

BUT whether does my Transport carry me?
 I shall add no more at present, than that I am,
 good Sir, your Brother and Companion in the
 Kingdom and Patience of *Jesus Christ*, &c.

* Zech. iv. 7.

† Isaiah li. 10.

L E T.



LETTER IX.

On the HARVEST.

DEAR SIR,

WHILE I was taking my late serious delightful Walks through the Fields, my most frequent and constant Companion was the industrious Bee; worthy of Imitation for her Diligence; never weary of her Work; improving every Season of agreeable Sun-shine, and visiting every Flower within her Reach, slighting the worthless, dwelling upon each that will yield Food and Sweetness, and by an inimitable Chemistry extracting, and preparing one of the noblest Compositions*. Methinks, Sir, my Errand into the Fields was something of the same Nature: O that I could present to you, as the Fruit of my Labours, an Extract, which shall be as the *Honey* and the *Honeycomb*. My Fellow-Traveller and Myself, I hope, are equally safe from the Arrests of those who claim Propriety in the Field: No Man brings an Action of *Trover* or *Trespass*

- * Thou art no Ruffian, who beneath the Mask
Of social Virtue, com'st to rob their Wealth:
Thou, like the harmless Bee, may'st freely range
From Mead to Mead, bright with exalted Flow'rs,
From Jessmine-Grove to Grove may'st wander gay
Thro' palmy Shades and aromatic Woods.

Thomson's Summer.

Trespass against that avowed Freebooter; and I trust the Crop will not be found lighter from any Handfuls which I shall take from it.

I AT length came to a Field, where they were *actually* at Harveſt-Labour. What Speed they make! The Scythe and the Sickle level all before them. Thus, thought I, Death bears down all; Tall and Low in Life; Saints and Sinners: *No Man hath Power over the Spirit to retain the Spirit in the Day of Death; neither is there any Discharge in this War* *. Now *the Rich and Poor meet together* †. All are laid flat and low in the ſilent Duſt, to riſe no more till the Reſurrection at the great Day. In ſome Reſpects the Difference was wide between one and another, that were joined in the cloſeſt Neighbourhood. Nominal Diſtinctions there were many, and Numbers there were that valued themſelves, and were flattered by others, upon a little Elevation in Life above the reſt of their Neighbours; but are not all equally levelled? One *grand* Diſtinction indeed there is at preſent, and indeed I know of no other that is *momentous*: It is *real and certain* now, in the Regards paid to it by the Lord and his holy Angels; in its Operations and Tendencies, ſo widely diſtant as Heaven and Earth; in the habitual Conformity of the Pious to the Nature of an Holy God, and the Reſemblance of the Wicked to Satan, ſince *they are of their Father the Devil, and the Luſts of their*

* Eccl. viii. 8. † Prov. xxii. 2.

*their Father they will do**. But how apparent will the Difference be found at the great Harvest Day, when the Lord of all *shall say to his Reapers, Gather ye together first the Tares, and bind them in Bundles, to burn them; but gather the Wheat into my Barn* †. Does not our Lord, as in a Glass, shew that awful event, in which all the Sons of Men will be most deeply interested! How just the Distinction, how exact the Penetration of the Messengers then employed! How readily will the Angels set about the Work, when they have their Commission? And how *vigorously* will they execute it? No *similar* Grain will insinuate itself among the good Wheat, nor one *good Ear* be lost, though never so small, among the useless Weeds! How great the Quantity of those that shall be certainly separated, thrown by, and become fit Fuel for Flames, which shall never be extinguished? “O, cried
 “I, *Gather not my Soul with Sinners* ‡! but let
 “me be bound up in the Bundle of Life §!”
 Have not I loved thy Saints? Did I not account them *the Excellent of the Earth* ||? Did I not delight to associate with them? Did I not flee from and *grieve over them that rose up against thee* ¶? Was it not my first Concern to be united to the Lord the Redeemer, and so to be united to all, who were *one* with him? Did I not solemnly enter myself as one of that holy Family to take my Lot with them, to be directed by the same Rule, to be animated by the same Spirit, live under the
 Influence

* John viii. 44. † Matt. xiii. 30. ‡ Psalm xxvi. 9. § 1 Sam. xxv. 29. || Psalm xvi. 3.
 ¶ Psalm cxxxix. 21.

Influence of the same Principles and Motives, unto the same End, and all in Order to live with them for evermore? O let all who love the Lord *Jefus Chrift* in Sincerity, love one another with a true Heart, and love fervently! They will soon be united in one Garner, and make but one Treasure to the Lord. Death will more clofely unite them in Person and Fellowship. Let the Forethought and Expectation of a free, affectionate, and eternal Intimacy above, caufe them to banish all Manner of Shyness here, and to run into one another's Arms.

I TOOK Notice that the Grain in the neighbouring Fields belonged to the same Proprietor, and was designed for the same Repository. Though there was a Distinction by Hedges and other Boundaries, and some real Difference in Point of *Goodness*, and perhaps the Produce of one Field might have been raised from a *better Soil* than another, yet it is *Wheat* still, not *Tare* or *Weed*. It is dear to the Owner, it came from his own Heap, it was sown by his own Direction, was the Object of his daily Care, and is accounted a Part of his Treasure. Let Christians, all *that truly call upon the Name of our Lord Jefus Chrift, both theirs and ours**, though separated by Seas or Continents, or some Distinction of a lesser Nature, remember whose they are, and whom they serve. If they are equally dear to their great Proprietor, sure they should not be estranged from each other. Should I not love that

* 1 Cor. i. 2.

that Christian, who is separated by Divine Grace to be unto the Lord a Name and a Praise †? Should I not esteem them, whom the Lord accounts his Jewels ‡? yea, who are a Crown of Glory in the Hand of the Lord, and a Royal Diadem in the Hand of their God §. Should not those who are Children of the same Father, and consequently all of them Brethren to Christ and one another, study to perform Offices of Kindness to each other? Let them pray by a Form, or not, yet let them pray for one another. Let one kneel, and another sit or stand at the Communion, yet let them remember that they are all one Bread and one Body*. Let them be Members of the established Church, or not, yet they should consider each other as Members of that mystical Body, of which Christ is the same honourable and animating Head. Let them think that they may be mistaken in the Punctilios in Party Distinction, and so labour to esteem each other better than themselves. In a Word, let them walk in Love, as Christ also hath loved them ||; and let them more frequently recollect this great Truth, that those Things in which they agree as Christians, are infinitely greater than those can be, in which they differ.

But my Sentiments on this Head are superseded, and most beautifully and exquisitely expressed by the ingenious and candid Mr. Hervey. “In a Grove of Tulips, or a Knot of Pinks, says he,
“dividual

† Jer. xiii. 11. ‡ Mal. iii. 17. § Isaiah
lxii 3 * 1Cor. x. 17. || Eph. v. 2.

“ one perceives a Difference in almost every In-
 “ dividual. Scarce any two are turned and
 “ tintured exactly alike: Each allows himself
 “ a little *Particularity* in his *Dress*, though all
 “ belong to one Family; so that they are vari-
 “ ous, and yet the same.---A pretty Emblem this
 “ of the smaller Differences between *Protestant*
 “ *Christians*. There are Modes of Religion,
 “ which admit of Variation, without Prejudice
 “ to sound Faith or real Holiness. Just as the
 “ Drapery, on these Pictures of the Spring,
 “ may be formed after a Variety of Patterns,
 “ without blemishing their Beauty, or altering
 “ their Nature.---Be it so then, that, in some
 “ Points of inconsiderable Consequence, several
 “ of our Brethren *dissent*: Yet let us all live ami-
 “ ably and sociably together; for we harmo-
 “ nize in *Principles*, though we vary in *Puncti-*
 “ *lios*. Let us join in Conversation, and inter-
 “ mingle Interests; discover no Estrangement of
 “ Behaviour, and cherish no Alienation of Af-
 “ fection: If any Strife subsists, let it be to fol-
 “ low our Divine Master most closely, in Humi-
 “ lity of Heart, and Unblameableness of Life;
 “ let it be to serve one another most readily, in
 “ all the kind offices of a cordial Friendship.
 “ Thus we shall be *united*, though *distinguished*;
 “ united in the same grand Fundamentals, tho’
 “ distinguished by some small Circumstantial;,
 “ united in one important Bond of brotherly Love,
 “ though distinguished by some slight, Peculiari-
 “ ties of Sentiments.

“ I APPREHEND

" I APPREHEND that between Christians,
 " whose Judgments disagree only about a Form
 " of Words, or Manner of Worship, there is no
 " more *essential* Difference, than between Flow-
 " ers that bloom from the same Kind of Seed,
 " but happen to be somewhat diversified in the
 " Mixture of their Colours.---Whereas if one
 " denies the Divinity of our Lord *Jesus Christ*,
 " and degrades the incarnate God to the Mean-
 " ness of a Creature; if *another* cries up the
 " Worthiness of human Works, and depreciates
 " the alone meritorious Righteousness of the
 " glorious Mediator; if a *third* addresses the
 " incommunicable Honours to a finite Being,
 " and bows to the Image, or prays to the Saint.
 " ---These are Errors, in my Opinion, unhap-
 " pily derogatory to the Redeemer's Dignity, and
 " not a little prejudicial to the Comfort of his
 " People. Against these, therefore, to remon-
 " strate, bespeaks not the censorious Bigot, but
 " the Friend of Truth and Lover of Mankind."

I REMARKED, that towards the Time of Har-
 vest the Grain ripened *apace*; a few Days would
 shew a considerable Difference. The large *Dews*
 by Night, and the glowing *Sun* by Day, and some
 intermingled *Showers* withal, concurred to this
 Event. And hath not this been the Case of some
 Christians? O that it may be mine and yours,
 my good Friend! May every Day, even the most
 distant, be a Day ripening for Glory; but may
 this be my Experience in a peculiar Manner, as

H

I am

I am approaching Death and Judgment*. May I find that I am more quickened by the holy and good Spirit, and that I am thus made more ready to every good Thought, Word, and Work! May my Faith be more strengthened, that I may have clearer Views of the Land of Promise on the other Side *Jordan*, and lean upon him, who is the Strength of his People, while travelling through this Wilderness, and the Fountain of all those Supplies they need, while they are detained in this barren, howling Desert! May Love glow and Flame more constantly, and more powerfully actuate and constrain! May I see my Title to the Land of Promise more clearly, and rejoice in Hope of the Glory of God more steadily! May every Occurrence be sanctified to this important End: Is it shining or showery as to worldly Circumstances? Is the Day bright, or the Night cloudy? May all the Variety be the Means of maturing my Soul, attempering me to the heavenly World, and working out for me a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory. At length may I be like the Shock, fully ripe; inviting, as it were, the Reaper's Sickle, by being quite prepared for the Garner.

I OBSERVED, in my Survey of the Field, that some Handfuls of Corn had a fair Out-side, were
well

- * The Soul's dark Cottage, batter'd and decay'd,
Lies in new Light, thro' Chinks that Time has
made:
Stronger by Weakness, wiser Men become,
As they draw near to their eternal Home:
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* Job xxv

well bearded, and, to the Eye, exceeding good; but, upon Trial, alas! they were Husk, Chaff, and nothing else. This greatly affected me: Immediately a Fear impressed my Mind, lest this should be an Emblem of myself; lest having a *Form* of Godliness, I should be found, upon an awful Trial, to be destitute of the *Power* of it. Dread, O my Soul, such a Case: Be serious and solemn in thy Search; for *what is the Hope of the Hypocrite, when God shall take away his Soul*?* O thou that seest me (and seest not as Man sees) discover to me my real State! O do not suffer, for Ten thousand Worlds do not suffer a poor Creature to proceed with a Lie in his Right Hand; let my Graces be genuine, and not one counterfeit; may I be such *in secret* now, as that I may stand approved by the Eye of Omniscience at present, and at *last may be rewarded openly* †. Search me, O God, and know my Heart, try me, and know my Thoughts, and see if there be any wicked Way in me, and lead me in the Way everlasting ‡.

I THOUGHT it not unworthy my Remark how differently the *light* and *loaded* Ears of Corn were as to Height. The first tall and erect, and towering above the Field, while the other bowed with their own precious Weight. Emblems, perhaps you will think, of the two Kinds of professing Christians. Have we not, with a melancholy Eye, surveyed some, who, we feared, had

H 2

little

Leaving the old, both Worlds at once they view,
Who stand upon the Threshold of the new.

Waller.

* Job xxvii. 8. † Mat. vi. 4. 6. ‡ Psalm cxxxix. 24.

little real Religion, proud and presumptuous, and looking down with Contempt upon the serious, thoughtful Christian. They have some Knowledge, but it is that *which puffs up* *. A fond Conceit of their superior Judgment and more enlightned Understanding hath led them to undervalue the most solid Attainments of their Forefathers and pious Coævals. How illy do they bear Opposition to their darling Notions? How ready are they to despise, perhaps scorn, those who have, in Obedience to Conscience, dared to differ from them? They would be thought the First-born of Wisdom, and her sole Favourites, and would persuade us, that all who are otherwise minded, had never the least Acquaintance with her, or so much as the Glimpse of her Illumination. But does true Wisdom take Pride into her Bosom, and clasp her there? Does it consist only in Ideas, which, without their due Influence and Impression are no better than Husk, or Chaff? Does not Wisdom seriously pity rather than condemn the Erroneous? Does it not take Pleasure to be taught in *Christ's* School, sit down at his Feet, and prefer his Instructions before the Dictates of *Pagan* Philosophy? Can it think slightly of the Oracles of Truth, or warp them to favourite Prejudices? Can genuine Wisdom leave the Heart vain, or the Conscience defiled? Or can it make light of an illuminating, conducting Spirit? In short, wherever Wisdom resides, does it not give more than Appearance and Out-side, I mean real and substantial Worth to the Soul?

AND

* 1 Cor. viii. 1.

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AND where there is true Worth, where the Heart is enriched with Grace, like the full Ear of Wheat, it bows with Humility. The solid Christian seriously studies, and highly values the Truths of *Christ*, and subscribes to them as revealed by him who is *the faithful and true Witness* *. He would have his former Conceptions tried and regulated by the Gospel, every contrary *Imagination cast down* †, and every corrupt Reasoning silenced and destroyed. He desires he may be governed in Head and Heart, by the Purity and Simplicity of the Gospel. When at the best he ascribes all his Goodness to another, and says, *By the Grace of God I am what I am* ‡. If enlarged in holy Duties, he cries, *Not I, but the Grace of God which is with me* §. The true Christian, animated with his Soul-humbling Wisdom, rests not in any Degree of Speculation; but desires that every Degree of his advancing Understanding may produce corresponding Affections, and while *as in a Glass he beholds the Glory of the Lord, he would be changed into the same Image from Glory to Glory* ||. The experienced Christian converses much with his own Heart, and is most distrustful of his own Understanding; and therefore often, and seriously looks upward as well as inward. He fears to err, he sees his Danger of erring; and therefore it is his Prayer to God, *Lead me in thy Truth and guide me* ¶. Did you follow him to his Retirements, you would hear him pleading, *I am a Stranger in the Earth, bide*

H 3

not

* Rev. i. 5. † 2. Cor. x. 5. ‡ 1 Cor. xv. 10.
 § Ibid. || 2 Cor. iii. 18. ¶ Psalm xxv. 5.

*not the Commandments from me**: And while others are thinking they are something when they are nothing, he owns himself, like the great Apostle, bowing down with the rich Treasure of his Graces, *Less than the least of all Saints* †, and *the very chief of Sinners* ‡.---

BUT what was that Acclamation? Sure it is the Voice of some who have obtained Victory, or of one that hath found great Spoil.---*It is the Joy of the Harvest!* Yonder Fields are cleared, yonder Stacks are loaded, the Labour of the Husbandman is crowned, all his Fears are over, his Hopes are fulfilled, his Family is Provided for, and the End of all his Pains in ploughing, and sowing, and weeding, and fencing, and cultivating, and watching, is answered, and he sits down to enjoy the Fruit of his Labour. This was the Reason of the Sound I heard.---See, the Troop comes! How are they adorned? they dance, they sing; Music assists them in both. All gay, all innocent; some serenely chearful, some exuberantly joyful, according to the Workings of their natural Tempers: With some it is only a carnal Mirth, while others mingle the devout Homage and the Ardors of Praise to the beneficent Being, who hath, from his invisible but inexhaustible Horn, poured out Plenty in so liberal a Manner, and crowned the Year with his Goodness. But I was peculiarly delighted, while I perceived the Master of the Field and
House,

* Psalm cxix. 19 † Eph. iii. 8. ‡ 1 Tim. i. 15.

House, for by this Time they were arrived at the joyful, illuminated Dwelling, giving them a kind Welcome, and encouraging their Chearfulness by his agreeable Looks, grateful Expressions, and hospitable Entertainment; and at the same Time directing the Current of their Joy into a right Channel. Let me never forget the *free*, but yet the *pious* Air with which he addressed his Neighbours and Servants. “ My Friends (says he) “ and Fellow-labourers in this Harvest, your “ Diligence and Vigour have been highly acceptable to me. You congratulate me upon the “ Crop being housed, and I thank you: I also “ congratulate you upon the finishing your extraordinary Toil; and let us with one Heart “ and Voice direct our Eye and Praise to him “ from whom we receive all: *His is the Earth, “ and the Fulness thereof**. He gave the Earth “ and Seed Power to bring forth, and the Husbandman Discretion to cultivate and manage “ them. It is he that strengthened these Sinews “ of ours to do the Work, and undergo the “ Hardships he called us to. It is true, it has “ been with the *Sweat of our Brows that we eat “ our Bread*†, but he gave us a sweet Gust to “ it: Did not Providence strangely support our “ Spirits, renew our wasted Strength, and make “ our Beds and Sleep easy? while others, whose “ Ease and Luxury we were ready to envy, “ could neither eat nor sleep ‡. If they lolled

H 4

“ in

* Psalm xxiv. 1.

† Gen. iii. 19.

‡ O knew he but his Happiness, of Men

The happiest He! who far from public Page,
Deep

“ in Chariots, while we laboriously followed the
 “ Plough; if they sat upon Velvet Couches,
 “ while we reposed our weary Limbs upon
 “ Oaken Benches, we have had the advantage,
 “ we have had Ease by Day, and sound Sleep by
 “ Night, while many of the Proud and Idle have
 “ been Strangers to Rest in both. My Friends,
 “ we have found that *God hath not left himself*
 “ *without Witness; he hath done us Good, he gave*
 “ *us Rain from Heaven* just as we wanted it, and
 “ by Means of changing *Seasons, he hath filled our*
 “ *Hearts with Food and Gladness* *. A Song of
 “ Praise then, before we sit down to Supper,
 “ you will not think any Way unsuitable to our
 “ Circumstances.

I.

Deep in the Vale, with a choice few retir'd,
 Drinks the pure Pleasures of the Rural Life!
 What tho' the Dome be wanting, whose proud
 Gate
 Each Morning vomits out the sneaking Crowd
 Of Flatt'ers false, and in their Turn abus'd? —
 What tho' he knows not those fantastic Joys
 That still amuse the Wanton, still deceive,
 A Face of Pleasure, but an Heart of Pain,
 Sure Peace is his; a solid Life, estrang'd
 'To Disappointment and fallacious Hope,
 Rich in Content, in Nature's Bounty rich,
 In Herbs and Fruits, whatever greens the Spring,
 When Heav'n descends in Show'rs, or bends the
 Bough,
 When Summer reddens and when Autumn beams,
 &c.

Thomson.

* Acts xiv. 17.

I.

'Tis by thy Strength the Mountains stand,
 God of Eternal Pow'r;
 The Sea grows calm at thy Command,
 And Tempests cease to roar.

II.

The Morning Light, and Ev'ning Shade,
 Successive Comforts bring;
 The plenteous Fruits make Harvest glad,
 And Flow'rs adorn the Spring.

III.

Seasons, and Times, and Moons, and Hours,
 Heav'n, Earth, and Air are thine;
 When Clouds distil in fruitful Show'rs,
 The Author is Divine.

IV.

Those wand'ring Cisterns of the Sky,
 Borne by the Winds around,
 With wat'ry Treasures well supply
 The Furrows of the Ground.

V.

The thirsty Ridges drink their Fill,
 And Ranks of Corn appear;
 Thy Ways abound with Blessings still,
 Thy Goodness crowns the Year.

Watts.

WHEN I parted from the joyful Swains my
 Thoughts took a Turn towards the Joy of the
 H 5 Christian:

Christian: And methinks in various Respects his *Life*, and the *Issues* of it, may be compared to the Scene which lies before us. He hath his gloomy and his pleasant Days; he *sows* in Tears of Soul-abasement, on the Account of Sin; and he *reaps* in the Joy of God's Salvation; partly in the *First-fruits of the Spirit*, which, like bright Intervals, or some agreeable Sun-shine Days between the Clouds and Fogs, the Storms and Darknefs of an uncomfortable Winter, give a Refreshment to the depressed Spirit, and enliven an Hope, that a better Season will come; but his Harvest lies beyond the Limits of Time, even in a boundless, joyful Eternity. Many Times his Mind is overspread with Sorrow, and he can behold little Prospect of Comfort; but he goes on in the Way of his Duty, and perseveres to honour his God and Redeemer in the Path of steady Obedience, and anon the Clouds scatter, his Sun shews its delightful Face, and he, who before hung his Harp upon the Willows, distuned in every String, now resumes it again, and strikes up a sacred and melodious Song to the Praise of his gracious God. Every Perfection administers to his Joy; every Relation of God to his People yields Consolation; every Blessing, whether in the Womb of the Promise, or actually bestowed, is Matter for his Praise; and all the Streams of Good continually flowing from the infinite Fountain swell the Heart with sacred Satisfaction. Now what a Change is there in the Countenance of the good Man: the Hills spread with Clouds,
and

and lowering upon the surrounding Plains, were before too apt an Emblem of his sorrowful Heart apparent in his Face; how often in mournful Accents was he heard to cry out, "I remember God, and am troubled *: Rebuke me not in thy Wrath, neither chasten me in thy hot Discipline: Mine Iniquities are gone over my Head, as a heavy Burden they are too heavy for me. I am feeble and sore broken; I have roared by reason of the Disquietness of my Heart †." But now his very Eyes and every Feature, give Notice of the Satisfaction within his Breast. Hear him triumphing in Jehovah: "This God is my God for ever and ever ‡. The Mountains shall depart, and the Hills shall be removed, but his Loving-kindness will he not take from me; nor shall the Covenant of his Peace be removed, faith that Lord, who hath Mercy on me §."

'The Lord can clear the darkeſt Skies,
Can give us Day for Night,
Make Drops of ſacred Sorrow riſe
To Rivers of Delight.

Watts.

But what is all this Joy to that of the Chriſtian when he enters the heavenly World after a tireſome Pilgrimage, and his long Conflict with the Trials of the preſent State?

Let

* Pfalm lxxvii. 3

† Pfalm xlviii. 14.

‡ Pfalm xxxviii. 1. &c.

§ Iſaiah liv. 10.

Let those who sow in Sadness wait
 Till the Fair Harvest come;
 They shall confess their Sheaves are great,
 And shout the Blessings home.

Watts.

You, my Friend, are *sowing to the Spirit*, and you shall of the Spirit reap *Life everlasting* *. It will not be long before your Soul, which is now like a Field whitening for Harvest, shall be gathered. O blessed Day! *Everlasting Joy* will be *then upon your Head*, and *Sorrow and Sighing* will be for ever fled away †. Methinks I see Angels hovering about you, and rejoicing over you: They attended you through the various Stages of your Pilgrimage, while you were a more distant Heir of Salvation, and with what Delight are they now tendering themselves to perform their last kind Office? O beneficent Spirits they! O the Overflowings of your Heart in divine Transport, when you find yourself under their *immediate Convey*! O the Sheaves that you will bring with you! Fulness of Joy is in them. There is no Room for godly Sorrow; there's nothing remaining to be mortified or opposed. The various Powers of the Soul run in one Channel with a full Stream of *the Water of Life*, clear as *Crystal*. Nothing will then remain but to recount the Difficulties of your Seed-time, the Dangers attending the Crop, the Care of the divine Grace, which watered it continually, and, that none might

* Gal. vi. 8. † Isaiah xxxv. 10.

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might hurt it, kept it Night and Day, and then to unite with all the Assembly of the Redeemed, in ascribing the most exalted Praises to the great Husbandman. In that Joy I am ambitious to share; and in a chearful Hope that I shall meet you in that blessed World, and with my *smaller Sheaf* shall join the general Acclamation, I remain,

Dear Sir, your affectionate Companion,
and Fellow-Labourer.

L E T-



LETTER X.

On SICKNESS.

*The Day that drove me to the Brink,
And pointed at Eternity below;
When on a Moment's Point th' important Dye
Of Life and Death spun doubtful, ere it fell,
And turn'd up Life -----* Young.

DEAR SIR,

IF that literary Intercourse which has so long subsisted between us, has seemed to lie dormant for a Season, do not impute it to any supine Indifference on my Part, or to any ungrateful Oblivion of one, whose *Friendship* I have always found as *improving*, as all your Acquaintance esteem it *honourable*.

It is true the Obstruction lies at my Door, as you never received a Return to your last Favour: But I have this to plead, that an irresistible Providence has laid an *Embargo* upon my Pen: And I once thought, would, long before this Time, have rendered the Hand that guides it for ever stiff and motionless. In a Word, the Sovereign Disposer hath for many Weeks exercised his afflicting Rod upon me, and his Strokes have almost crushed me down to the Dust of Death.

I had

I had often *read*, but had never *felt* the Words of *Heczekiab*, till my faltering Tongue repeated them, "I said, in the Cutting off of my Days I shall go to the Gates of the Grave; I am deprived of the Residue of my Years; I shall behold Man no more with the Inhabitants of the World; mine Age is departed, and is removed from me like a Shepherd's Tent," &c. * For a considerable Time the *Tears* of Friends around me, a *labouring Pulse*, the *doubtful Countenance* and secret *Whispers* of my Physicians, testified the Suspense I was supposed to have been in, and the Uncertainty, which Way the *important Beam* would turn, that now hung in an *Equilibrium*.

My present Writing testifies what the Issue hath been. In the Midst of the Prayers of my Friends, while the Symptoms of my Distemper rather prognosticated a contrary Event, I began to revive. But for many Days the *Winter Solstice* was an Emblem of my State. My lengthned Breath, my rising Pulse, my short Slumbers testified an Amendment, and yet so slight, that the affectionate Fears of those about me made them jealous, and caused them to rejoice with Trembling. You know at this Time of the Year † a dark Day or two coming on beclouds the opening Scene, dashes our Hopes that the Days are indeed lengthened, and causes us to imagine that what we took to be *Realities* were

* Isaiah xxxviii. 10, &c.

† December 15.

were only the Creatures of our own *Fancies*: Something like this my Friends would persuade me it was with them. At length a kind Providence hath put the Matter out of question; and my *trembling Hand* and *crooked Lines* make it unnecessary to say that I embrace the *first* Opportunity of transmitting my *Regards* to my Friend, but especially of declaring the *Goodness* of the Lord, who, *though he hath chastened me sore, yet hath not given me over to Death**. I do it, that *you may magnify the Lord with me, and that we may exalt his Name together*†.

WHILE your cordial Friendship excites the Emotions of Tenderness upon a Recollection of this Scene, your *Piety* will be ready to inquire what were my Views of Things, while my Soul was almost *sitting upon my Lips*, in the awful Suspense, whether to quit the tottering Tabernacle, or permitted to stay a little longer a *Tenant at Will* in the Cottage of Clay.

O, SIR, to talk of Death, and to enter in good Earnest upon dying Work, are *Two Things*. To view the Messenger who comes as a *Serjeant* from the Judge of all, at a Distance first, but afterwards as actually approaching, and that too with hasty Steps, with his opened Commission in one Hand, and his Dart to execute it in the other, and with an *expecting* Grave and *Eternal* Judgment in his immediate Train, is as *different* as
to

* Psalm cxviii. 18.

† Psalm. xxxiv. 3,

to view a painted Lion, who is only terrible on Canvas, and to see him really with his rolling Eyes of Fire, and hear his hideous Roar.

Nature, her bravest Efforts broke,
Would fain resign the Strife,
But oh! the Soul at Dying shook,
And shiver'd back to Life.

See all before me, wild I cry'd,
Th' eternal Ocean roll!
Tremendous Gulph unknown, untry'd,
And thither hastes my Soul.

O how can I sustain the Woe,
If when I drop my Shell,
The Judge his flaming Bolt should throw,
And dash me down to Hell!

To Hell! intolerable Thought,
A World of black Despair;
Thence no Redemption can be bought,
And boundless Wrath is there.

Gibbons.

I CANNOT say, but I had frequently, in former Times endeavoured to celebrate my own Funeral, though I never went so far as, with the Emperor *Charles V.*, to put myself in my Coffin, never caused my Grave to be dug, or laid myself down in the *solemn Intrenchment*. I never did thus indeed, but I often separated myself from the busy Scenes of Life, and endeavoured to draw aside the Curtain of Mortality, and look into the

vast

vast Abyss. I often in a peculiarly solemn Manner, recollected Death and its important Consequences, when I attended a Friend to the Grave, or saw the awful Approach of that Monster, in the quivering Limbs, distorted Eyes, and convulsed Countenance of my Acquaintance, or when I accidentally saw a Neighbour carried to his long Home, or beheld in the Repositories of the Dead, a fresh Grave opening its Mouth, or a rotten Bone, or shattered Skull, or when I heard but the Funeral Bell from the Tower. I say, I often took Occasion from these Things to think the more of Death, remembering a saying of Bishop *Hopkins*, that “ *It is no great Mistake* “ *to account every Funeral our own.*” I often looked into Eternity, till through the Perspective of Faith, assisted by steady Meditation, the Objects before me were *brought near*, and *increased in Bulk*; while the Things of Time, *as if I had turned the other End*, lessened to my View, and appeared comparatively despicable. But yet, O how shall I tell my Friend the Difference between my former, and these latter Converses with Death? I had before a distant Glimpse, but now an immediate and comprehensive View. The Light, which *before* reflected on my visive Powers, was as the *Dawn* of the Morning; but now it was almost like the dazzling *Noon*. My Soul was awake--- How did my Heart palpitate? my Breath, which was shortened before by my *Fever*, almost forgot to return, when gone from my Nostrils; like the Traveller upon the Road, who, before he is aware, *stands still* to view some wonderful

derful Object, that had just broke in upon his Eye. Could I make the busy World know how insignificant they and their Pursuits appeared, they would receive the Story with a Jest; or the good-natured Carnalist would tell me, with Pity, that my Brain was weakened by my Illness, and that I had not *even yet* recovered from my *Delirium*. But O, I assure you, were it possible for me to communicate my Views of Persons and Things, the *Exchange* would be in Danger of being locked up, for Want of Merchants to frequent it; and the high Offices at Court, the most *lucrative* and *honourable*, into which so many are pressing, would want Petitioners, nay, scarce would Royal Importunities prevail upon Persons to be at Leisure to accept and fill them. The greatest Cities to me were but *Mole-hills*, and the busy Inhabitants but a Company of *Emmets*, and the *richest* Prize seemed to me as inconsiderable as a *Grain of Corn*. The merry Sensualists were but as *Grasshoppers*, whose Noise was despicable and troublesome, and whose life I saw to be exceeding short, and liable to be crushed every Moment. Princes I called *Glow-worms*, which shine only to those who are in the *Dark*, and are found to be no better than contemptible *Insects* (dim and disrobed of all their Lustre) when the *Light* of Eternity breaks in upon them.

I THOUGHT, I *believed*, and was somewhat *affected* with the great Truths of the Gospel *before*; and how have the Glories of that Revelation darted upon my Eye, and overspread my
Soul,

Soul, when I have heard you descant upon them, with a pleasing Mixture of *solid Judgment* and *ravished Affection*? But, O Sir, Words are far from being sufficient to be a *Vehicle* of my Thoughts, while I would fain tell you what I felt when Death was in immediate View.

COULD the unbelieving *Wretches* (for I could with an affectionate Pity call them no better) have seen what I did, sure, thought I, it would not only have cured them of their Infidelity, but have made them *confirmed* Believers; yea, perhaps *Preachers* of that Faith, which now they treat with Contempt. O the Glories of the Godhead! O the ravishing Sweetness that appeared in every Feature of the Countenance, I mean in every Character of *Jesus the Mediator* *. Though Nature was sunk low, and I could scarce
utter

- Tho' stain'd with Sins and Follies, yet serene
In penitential Peace and chearful Hope,
Sprinkled, and guarded with atoning Blood.
Thy vital Smiles, amid this Desolation,
Like heav'nly Sun beams hid behind the Clouds,
Break out in happy Moments, with bright Radi-
ance
Cleaving the Gloom; the fair celestial Light
Softens and gilds the Horrors of the Storm,
And richest Cordials to the Heart conveys.
Incarnate Love
Has seiz'd and holds me in Almighty Arms:
Here's my Salvation, my eternal Hope,
Amid the Wreck of Worlds, and dying Nature.

Watts's Miscel.

utter a complete Sentence before, yet I remember I cried out, to the Surprize of all my Friends, "I account all Things but Dung, that I may win *Christ*, and be found in him!" How did I with Resentment of *Heart*, and my Friends told me it appeared in my Looks, pronounce Foolishness upon all the vain Amusements of the present Life? with what Earnestness did I recommend to all an Interest in the Redeemer, as the one Thing needful, and to win him as a *Prize* that includes in it perfect Righteousness to *justify*, and a Fullness of Grace to *sanctify*. My View was so clear, my Sense so strong, my whole Soul was so filled with the Reality and Importance of this, that I remember I collected and exerted all my Strength, and thought at the Time, were I a Martyr for my Lord in spending and being spent, it could not be for a better Master, or in a better Cause. I could willingly have breathed out my last in exalting *this Prince of the Kings of the Earth*, this Branch of Renown, this Chief among Ten Thousand: And my Attendants tell me since, that it was almost as I wished; that in the midst of my *Rhapsody*, my Strength failed with my Spirit and Voice, and that I sunk into what they imagined would have proved a *fatal Deliquium*. One, it seems, told a near Relation, that I had been like the Lamp that had stood before them and sunk into its Socket, then gave a sudden Blaze, and expired.

BUT

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BUT I cannot proceed: My Hand trembled before; and, while I am reviewing past Occurrences, the Sense of them overwhelms me. I must therefore only add, that I am,

Dear Sir, Yours, &c.

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LETTER XI.

On SICKNESS.

MY PYLADES,

AS I broke off so abruptly in my last, it is probable you may expect I should proceed with the Relation of some past Incidents, without my hearing from you; and therefore, as soon as I judge myself sufficiently recruited to resume the *History*, I am willing to *return to it*, that by it I may tell you *what God hath done for my Soul*. But I assure you the Subject is still so impressive upon my tender Spirits, that the Recollection of it is somewhat like the breaking in of a very strong Light on weak Eyes; so that when my returning Strength fits me for some other Employment, I am, while entering on this, ready to be overset, as soon as I begin steadily to reflect. And now, my dear Friend, as you have been several Years to me, what *Jonathan* was to *David*, I can take a Freedom with you, which in *common* Affairs I *cannot*, which in *this* Affair I *dare* not with others. If I communicate my Secrets to all, to whom should I, if not to you? Is it not one End of that sacred Thing called *Friendship*? May I not talk to you as to myself, when I am conscious you are *almost* as dear? If I speak any Thing favourable of *the Writer*, I assure you it is not
to

to magnify myself in your Eyes, but that I may erect a Banner to the Honour of him who hath dealt very graciously with his unworthy Servant. If I am any Thing better than a miserable Sinner, *It is by the Grace of God that I am what I am*; and if such a worthless Creature may glory, I am taught by the Apostle, and I am willing to learn, to *glory in the Lord**.

I WOULD bow the Knee with Humility before the divine Footstool, while I tell my Friend, that while my Body was tiring and fainting under the Load of its Distemper, I had a Calmness of Thought and Vigour of Spirits, which I could never have expected in such Circumstances. I received the Sentence of Death with *Hezekiah*, but I cannot say *I wept sore*, nor did I *mourn as a Dove*. At first indeed the View was awful; it put me upon serious Thoughtfulness; I said within myself—"To appear before God, the Judge of all. ----- To enter the World of Spirits. "To be fixed in an Everlasting State. ----- To "hear a Sentence that shall never be reversed." How important! what amazing Scenes! what infinite Concern! ----- O my Soul, what if thy former Hopes should deceive thee? and the Mouth of thy Judge should pronounce, "Go, "thou Curfed, into Everlasting Fire?" Can thine Heart endure, and thine Hands be made strong to contend with God? This Thought thrilled through every Vein, and seemed to touch each tender Fibre of the Soul.

Thou

* 1 Cor. i. 31.

Thou lovely chief of all my Joys,
 Thou Sov'reign of my Heart,
 How shall I bear to hear thy Voice
 Pronounce the Sound, *Depart?*

Watts.

Oh! how can I sustain the horrid Hour,
 That hurls me headlong from the Verge of Life,
 Ten thousand thousand gloomy Fathom deep
 Down to th'Abyfs of Hell, there to endure,
 With gasty Spectres, and opprobrious Fiends,
 Eternity of Being in the Pains
 Of Guilt self-tort'ring, and surrounding Fires!

Gibbons.

But it pleased the Lord soon to calm the rising
 Billows of my Fears: I felt the Pulse of my
 Soul: I enquired into past Transactions, from
 which all the World had been excluded; many
 of which I never had the Courage to communi-
 cate even to you; Transactions most important,
 which had swallowed up all my Powers, but
 which were known only to him, *before whom all*
Things are naked and open *. I recollected the
Seasons, the *Places*, and other Circumstances of my
 first Closures with an all-sufficient and glorious
 Mediator; and the Manner in which that Inter-
 course was carried on and improved. I called to
 Mind the Views I had had of Sin, in its *Guilt*,
Power, and *Pollution*, and the Suitableness I saw
 in *Jesus* the Redeemer, even in the *Blood* and
Righteousness, the *Power* and *Grace* of that *Em-*

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nue!

* Heb. iv. 13.

nuel. I had a Testimony within, that I had fled for Refuge to him, as the *Hope*, the *only Hope* set before me; that I had, Days and Times without Number, repeated the solemn Acts of Repentance towards God, and Faith in our Lord *Jesus Christ*, and that I had received Glimpses of Light, and Streams of Comfort upon some of those Occasions; especially that I had enjoyed what I was ready to call *the Witnessings of the Spirit*, when attending the Lord's Supper, and partaking the Memorials of his Death. I was conscious I had seen the *Righteousness* of his Sceptre, and had been enabled with all my Strength to bow before it. I found myself willing in the Day of his Power, and under the Views of Holiness as amiable, and the Constraints of his Grace as sweet and efficacious, I had renounced other Lords, and had yielded myself entirely to his Service, accounting it my Honour to wear his Livery, and to be registered among his Servants. I had often through the Mediator, resigned myself to God, as one of his Covenant-People, to be made happy in his Favour, and had consecrated myself as a living Temple to him, entreating him to fill me with his Presence and constant Habitation, and adorn me with the Beauties of Holiness, while I renounced every Idol that would be an Offence to the Eyes of his Glory. And, though I was sensible of a Multitude of Imperfections attending such Transactions, and a great many Slips and Stumbles in my After-Walk, yet an humble Consciousness of my *Integrity* was no small Satisfaction. I often said with Pleasure,

sure,

sure, "*I know whom I have believed, and that he
"is able to keep what I have committed to him *."*
at other Times I repeated those Lines of Dr.
Watts, with a Relish that I cannot express:

Jesus, my God! I know his Name,
His Name is all my Trust;
Nor will he put my Soul to Shame,
Nor let my Hopes be lost.

THEN with an holy, but humble Triumph,
for I cannot describe what Depths of Self-Abase-
ment, and what Heights of Admiration, I was
in at the same Time, I cried out,

Then shall he own my worthless Name
Before his Father's Face,
And in the new *Jerusalem*
Appoint my Soul a Place.

AND will he, said I, with Arms extended and
Eyes elevated? It is enough; "*Now, Lord, let-
"est thou thy Servant depart in Peace, for mine
"Eyes have seen thy Salvation †."*

THEY, who are resolved to be prejudiced
against such Things, may call this Experience by
what Name they please; they may tell me I am
an *Enthusiast*, and a babbling *Eccho* to my vain
Fancy. But I know *I speak the Words of Truth
and Soberness*. I am persuaded that what I felt
were the Witnessings of the Lord's Spirit with

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my

* 2 Tim. i. 12. † Luke ii. 29, 30.

my Spirit, the Seal of my Adoption, and the Evidence of my Title to the Inheritance. They came in as *Rational Deductions* from allowed Scripture-Principles, and they produced not only a *Peace which passeth all Understanding* *, but a Temper which was as opposite to Sin, as it was to trouble. The Hope I had helped to *purify* as much as to *pacify*. Pure Light and ineffable Joy descended in the same Emanation. I wanted not, while this Consolation remained, any farther Arguments against Sin: It was my Soul's Aversion; every Power of it within me was an Enemy to Sin. Holiness was beautiful: Each of the Divine Commands wore an attractive Charm upon it, and I was prepared to run its Ways with a devout Enlargement. The Views I had of God's paternal Love, were attended with a filial Fear and Affection: His Favour was never so desirable and delightful; and I could not have done any Thing to displease him, though all the World had been the alluring Bait.

I saw the *pearly Gates* of the new *Jerusalem* almost unfold for my Admittance. I invited the Angels to come and be my *Convoy*, and was preparing to attend them. I was charmed with the Thought, and began, as it were, to try and adjust my Wings for the joyful Flight †. I
esteemed

* Phil. iv. 7.

† My cheerful Soul now all the Day
Sits waiting here and sings;
Looks thro' the Ruins of her Clay,
And practises her Wings.

Faith

esteemed myself more than half loosened from my Clay, and could easily drop the Clog. I was like one who had been travelling in foul Weather and bad Roads; my Cloathing was become troublesome, and I could easily part with it for better. I never thought, in the former part of my Life, that it was possible for me to be so weaned from Earth, and my dear Relations and Possessions, and that I could have been so content to go down to the Chambers of the Grave. Many a Time indeed I should have been willing to be caught up to Paradise; but when I recollected, that I must pass to Glory through the Violence of Death, and the Glooms and Sorrows of the expiring Bed, my Desires faltered. But at this Season I was got above all; my Prospects of Heaven were so bright, both with regard to the *Felicity* itself and my *Title* to it, that instead of shrinking at the Thoughts of *Mortality*, I invited the Messenger of my Dissolution. I could hardly call him *Monster*; I bid him undress his Master's Child, and lay him to Rest in the Bosom of his *Jesus*. Even his grim Countenance wore a Smile. I touched his Dart, and felt it *blunted*; examined his Serpent-train, to discover his Sting,

I 3

and

Faith almost changes into Sight,
While from afar she spies
Her fair Inheritance in Light
Above created Skies. —

The Shines of Heav'n rush sweetly in
At all the gaping Flaws;
Visions of endless Biss are seen,
And native Air she draws.

Watts.

and found this disabled Enemy had lost it. He confessed that of old he had a tremendous Sting, but that he had hardly entered the Lifts with one who was a Superior to him; that he once presumed he had got the Victory and had nailed his *Antagonist* to a deadly Tree, but that, even while he was triumphing upon his Conquest, he found he had only fastened his own Sting into the fatal Wood, and was obliged to leave it there. Then it was that *thy Emanuel* (that, says he, was his Name) soon disengaged himself, sharpened his Sword, renewed the Conflict, took me Captive, led me, a poor, disarmed Enemy, dragged at his Chariot-Wheels, and has kept me ever since under a Restraint, which I had never Power to break through.

O MY Friend, since this Prelibation of the Milk and Wine of the celestial *Canaan*, I know more of Heaven than before. A few Hours Experience has taught me more than all the Volumes which I have canvassed, and all the Conversation which I have had with my Fellow-Pilgrims. I am ready to say to you, as *St. Paul* to *Agrippa*, with a little Variation, “ *I would to God that you were altogether such as I was, except my Bonds, my Sickness.** ”

I now humbly request of you two Things: The one is, That you will join your Prayers with mine, for Grace and Wisdom to *behave* aright after such *signal Mercies* received; that
“ *I may* ”

* *Acts* xxvi. 29.

"*I may walk worthy of the Lord unto all well-pleasing*;" that I may never forget the Vows of my Distress, nor the Loving-kindness of HIM, the compassionate DAY'S-MAN*, who interposed so graciously in my Favour, enabled me to *make the eternal God my Refuge*, and then *put underneath me his everlasting Arms*†; who set home the Promises and sealed the Contents of them to my Soul; who raised me above my Fears, and multiplied my Consolations; who filled a Cup of divine Cordials, and said, "*Drink, yea drink abundantly, O Beloved.*" What do I now owe? What shall I render? He alone, who hath laid me under the Obligation, can enable me to act up to it. Entreat the Effusion of the good Spirit! Should I degenerate into a Temper of Carnality, it must be affronting to that Grace which has been so generous and free, so seasonable and illustrious. I entreat your Prayers the more, as I know so much of the Deceitfulness of my Heart, and how impossible I shall find it to stand firmly by my own *Watching*, or even to *watch*, unless assisted from on high. I have had *Meat to eat, that the World knows not of*; and yet, such is the sad Influence of the Flesh, that I am not without Fears lest I should again relish the *Onions and Garlick* of an earthly *Egypt*‡, after I have been feasted with celestial *Manna*.

THE other Request that I would make, is, that you would favour me with your best Advice

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in

* Job ix. 33. † Deut. xxxiii. 27. ‡ Numb. xi. 5.

in such Circumstances as mine. Your Judgment and Experience, your Insight into the Depths of Satan, his Enmity to the Power of Godliness, and his Wiles to oppose it, cause me to hope much from your Counsel and Advice, your Cautions and Incentives. I cannot question your Readiness to assist me, from the Affection ever shewn to, good Sir,

Your most obliged Servant,

ORESTES.

LET.



LETTER XII.

On the LAST JUDGMENT.

*I think of nothing else; I see, I feel it!
I see the Judge enthron'd! the flaming Guard!
The Volume open'd! open'd ev'ry Heart!
A Sun-beam pointing out each secret Thought.*

Young.

DEAR SIR,

WHEN I sit down to write to you, methinks I am almost led to imagine I am speaking to myself; and, unless I flatter myself, I am ready to conclude, from the long Experience I have had of your inviolable Friendship, I may be as free. If I, therefore, at any Time express myself abruptly, or in Language entirely open, and without Reserve, you know a Friend may be permitted to converse with one in an Undress, when at the same Time we would not see Company in general, without appearing in some Form.

I WAS lately led by Providence to -----, at the Time of our Assize: When I have an Opportunity of this Kind, I always embrace it, and attend at one or other of the public Courts. The Solemnity of the Judge, his sedate and patient Attention to every Passage in the least De-

gree material, his Exactness in scrutinizing, his Impartiality in weighing and comparing all Circumstances, his Justness in representing them to the Jury, the Eloquence of the Advocates, the awful rattling of the Prisoners Chains, the alternate Vicissitudes of Fear and Hope, as their Case seemed to vary in the Process of their respective Trials; the Joy of the Acquitted, the Distress of the Convicted and Condemned, and the attending, gaping, and listening Crowd, are Objects which carry in them their solemn Entertainment, and minister to me Matter of serious Instruction and Admonition.

I HAPPENED now to be on the *Crown Side*. I should be glad were Transactions so important, and which fall under the Cognizance of such an Assembly, managed with more Solemnity, as Life and Death are suspended on them, as the Justice of the Nation is then administered, and the Oath of GOD is so frequently taken. There was one Case, which, no doubt, peculiarly attracted the Attention of many present; I am sure it did mine, and hath in some Degree fixed it to this Day. A poor Creature was indicted and tried for a *Felony*, which had he been convicted of, must have been *capital*. But O the Agony impressed upon the Man's Countenance, especially when a *credible* Witness came and deposed, not only to the Reality of the Fact, but several heinous Aggravations in the committing it. A Pencil could not draw the Eagerness and Consternation in the Prisoner's Looks! how plentifully

fully did the Sweat burst out! how ready were the Drops to drown his Face! He looked as if he would have spoke, but his Thoughts seemed too big for an Utterance; what forced its Way was impetuous, confused, unconnected, and little to the Purpose. Happy for him, that, tho' the *Fact* and *Malignity* of it were too evidently proved, the tender Judge had a *Scruple*, by reason of a particular Circumstance, whether it came under the Limitation of the Statute; and, though while He was speaking in his Favour, one would have imagined the poor Creature should have been all Attention, yet his former Fears had raised such a Tumult in his Brest, that he was in no Capacity of hearkening. I came away greatly impressed, transferring my Thoughts to an Affize, as much more important as the Soul is superior to the Body, and the second Death more dreadful than that which only consigns the Body to Insensibility and Rottenness.

WHEN I had turned my Back upon the City, and all its Noise, my Thoughts ran easily into the following Tract, as the preceding Occurrences had given them a strong Bias. How soon, O my Soul, will an Affize take Place, as much more awful as the Concern of the Soul is far greater than that of the Body, and the Appearance of a *God* is more magnificent than that of a *Worm*! When these Itinerant Commissioners of Royal Justice enter into the Place of Judgment, what Pomp attends them? I saw the Officers in their rich Liveries; the Sound of the
Trumpet

Trumpet was loud and solemn; Gravity and Solemnity dwelt upon the Slowness of the Pace, with which the Ceremony moved on: The gazing Multitude was vast; perhaps more than a thousand Eyes were fixed at once, and fixed *continually* upon the *Judge himself*. And is it so? What is a Mortal, a Worm, a Mimic of Royalty, one who a little while ago was one of our Neighbours and Familiars, to him who is *over all, God blessed for ever**. When the Judge of the whole Earth, of Quick and Dead, descends, he will appear arrayed in the ineffable Glories of the *Godhead*. Perhaps the *Manhood* may so far break or attemper the intense Rays of the *Divinity*, as to make them sufferable to Mortals, whose weaker Powers might be otherwise overwhelmed; but when it is said † that *he will appear in his own Glory and the Glory of the Father*, O how much is included! and how transcendently glorious will be the Appearance! If I cannot bear the Radiance of one *Angel* appearing like himself, how can I conceive of the Lustre that shall shine from Myriads of those Spirits about *their* Lord and *my* Judge? and yet what is the Flame of a Seraph to the infinitely majestic Splendor of the *Godhead*? or what are all the twinkling *Gems* that adorn the Night to the illustrious *Diamond*, whose Blaze constitutes the Day? How will Conviction and Horror strike through the Heart of the Unbeliever, who dared to say, to think that the Doctrine of a future Judgment

was

* Rom. ix. 5. † Luke ix. 26.

was but a cunningly devised Fable to keep the World in Awe; and who at Times sat in the Seat of the Scornful, and presumed to cry out with a Sneer, "*Where is the Promise of his Coming* *." Infatuated Man! how deaf to the Instructions of the Word, the Declarations of Truth itself, and the Expostulations of Divine Mercy! Unhappy Creature! that would not be persuaded of the Reality of the Thing, till it actually takes Place; or believe that he should be judged, till he is summoned to the Bar. Surely he is the most awful Instance of Misery, who hath an Account to give as *fearful* as it is *long*, whose constant Fulfilment of the Desires of the Flesh and vicious Passions of the Mind must inflame the Reckoning, and yet who has taken no Care to prepare for such an Event! Now how glad would he be to shelter himself in inaccessible Caves, or be buried under the Weight of the most ponderous Rocks †, if any Place could be found where the All-penetrating Eye could not discern him, and where the Omnipotent Arm could not arrest him. But ah! the whole Creation is immediately present to the View of the great *Jehovah*, and equally subject to his Power. He that is summoned must instantly be set to the Bar, and yet ‡ *Where shall the Ungodly and Sinner appear, and how shall he stand in Judgment* §? is the anxious Inquiry of the despairing Sinner. What would the *Delinquent* in such a Situation part with, either for the Favour of the Judge, or the Extinction

* 2 Pet. iii. 3, 4. † Rev. vi. 15, 16. ‡ 1 Pet. iv. 18. § Psalm i. 5.

tion of his Crimes, or that Time might be recalled, or one Trial more might be afforded him, that his Thoughts, his Tongue, his Hands, and all his Aims and Pursuits might be more suitably employed? But *shall the Earth be forsaken for thee? or shall the Rock be removed out of its Place* *? Shall the Rule of Judgment be changed, when settled by unerring Wisdom, for the Sake of a rebellious Worm? or the Sentence be reversed, that *Time shall be no more* †, though confirmed by the Solemnity of an Oath? Had he all the Riches which the Bowels of the Earth contain, could he ransack the Sea, and add its vast Contents; nay, could he call the very Stars his own, and pay them away at their full Value, how readily, how thankfully would he expend all for a Smile from that JESUS, whom once he rejected with obstinate Contempt? or if that cannot be, to purchase the Roll out of the Hand of Divine Justice for the consuming Flames, where his Crimes and the Threatnings of divine Vengeance are faithfully recorded and solemnly denounced; or that he might have the infinite Benefit of an everlasting Annihilation.

BUT the Day, the appointed Day, long ago settled in the unalterable Decree, is now come; Angels and Saints could not hasten it before, and now neither Devils nor wicked Men can postpone it; he that bore long, will not now keep Silence, but with Regard to Saints and Sinners *will judge the World in Righteousness* ‡.

I HAP-

* Job xviii. 4. † Rev. x. 6. ‡ Psalm xcvi. 13:

I HAPPENED to have a Call to visit the common Prison just upon the Commencement of the Assize? but what a Scene presented itself? how strong the Alarm? how much Paleness in one Countenance, and what lively Flushing in another? He who revelled it like a *Debauchee*, a few Days ago, as if he was afraid he should not *soon enough* fill up the Measure of his Wickedness, was silent and sullen, grave and gloomy. He who before disturbed the *Peace* of his Neighbours by Day, and their *Slumbers* by Night, now appeared quite an Object of Compassion by the Melancholy that sat brooding upon his Brow, and the rueful Shade it had cast over his whole Countenance. Conscience anticipated the Forms of the Court and at once acted the Part of Prosecutor, Witness, Judge, and Jury; for it seemed to call him to the Bar, read his Indictment, confound him to Silence, and then condemn him. Methought here was a Type of more solemn Events: “What, cried I, will the great Judge do at last, “but act over again what his deputed Commissi- “oner, Conscience, had done before, confirm “the Conviction and ratify the Doom? O cloudy Morning, ushering in the most stormy Day “the whole Creation ever saw, that Heaven, or “Earth, or Hell were ever interested in, or privy to, when the Judge shall, before the Eye “of the Prisoner, Angels, and Men, turn over “the Records of Heaven, the Eternal Memorial- “book of his own Conscience, and read there, “in the Hearing of all, the *secret* Iniquities, “and *horrid* Enormities of the Sinner’s Life, “with

“ with their various *Aggravations*; to every of
 “ which the Book of Conscience, as a faithful
 “ *Counterpart*, bears its Testimony, and declares
 “ all true to an exact Tittle.” Now also the
 double Volume of Law and Gospel will be unfolded, and what was formerly the incomparable Privilege of the Prisoner, will turn to his greater Condemnation. *Revelation*, which cast a Light upon his Paths, will enhance his Guilt far beyond theirs, *who stumbled upon the dark Mountains* of invincible Ignorance, and especially will that Gospel of Grace, which, though it shone most conspicuously in that *Revelation*, yet could not melt his obdurate Heart, nor bend his Iron Spirit, by reason of his ungrateful Abuse, prove like a mighty Mill-stone hung about the Neck of the Sinner, and sink him the deeper into the Lake, which burneth with Fire and Brimstone. O my Soul come not thou into their Secrets now, that thou be not united to them at the last terrible *Audit!* The Thought of being condemned then will be the more dreadful, as from the Sentence pronounced there will be no Appeal. No! It will be writ in eternal Brass; and, were it possible that Angels and Saints could intercede, or that the Sinner could pour out Tears as plentiful and briny as the Ocean itself, still the Judge, with a Countenance as steady as the Throne he sits upon, will say, “ *What I have written, I have written.*”

Eternity, the various Sentence past,
 Assigns the sever'd Throng distinct Abodes,
 Sulphureous

Sulphureous or Ambrosial : What ensues ?
 The Deed predominant ! the Deed of Deeds !
 Which makes an Hell of Hell, an Heav'n of
 Heav'n.

The Goddeſs, with determin'd Aſpect, turns
 Her adamantine Key's enormous Size
 Thro' Deſtiny's inextricable Wards,
 Deep-driving ev'ry Bolt on both their Fates.
 Then from the cryſtal Battlements of Heav'n
 Down, down ſhe hurls it thro' the dark Pro-
 found,
 Ten thouſand thouſand Fathom, there to ruſt,
 And ne'er unlock her Reſolution more.

Young.

BUT the Pillar of Cloud was alſo a Pillar of
 Fire ! It had a ſhining as well as a dark Side !
 That Day which dawns with ſo lowering an
 Aſpect upon the impenitent Rebel, will open
 with equal Gladneſs upon the Saint. No Mar-
 riage-day ever brought with it ſo much Luſtre
 and Joy. The Voice of the Archangel which
 awakes the Dead, and breaks up every Tomb,
 will be the moſt pleaſing Melody to the riſing
 Saint. With what pious Benevolence will the
 Angels, who with ſo much Readineſs performed
 the Offices of ſacred Friendſhip to the Chriſtian
 in this World of Danger and Imperfection, cloſe
 up their Scene of Miniſtration, by ſearching out
 the Duſt of the Redeemed, and ranſacking, ſhall
 I ſay, the Ruins of the Creation, at the Divine
 Direction, to find out and collect what is more
 precious to them than Grains of Gold, or Beds of
 Diamonds ?

Diamonds? O how brilliant will be the Assembly, when from the four Winds the dear Favourites of Heaven are collected into one Body *? What Extasy will fill every Heart of the People that compose it? How illustrious will they be in the Eyes of beholders? but especially how grateful, how satisfactory will they be to him who sees of the Travel of his Soul? The Soul thoroughly sanctified, and the Body thus transformed, how well attuned will they be to each other? The former *without any remaining Spot or Wrinkle*,†, and the latter so changed *as to be fashioned like unto Christ's most glorious Body*‡.

My Friend, shall we know ourselves, or each other? are we, can we be, the same identical Persons, who *drag'd about* with us a Body which was a constant Clog to the Soul, and many Times a Burthen to itself! No longer does it perversely draw the Spirit from its God, or from its Heaven, when it would be pressing eagerly towards both! Nor, as a dead Weight, or as a Stone at the Foot, hang heavy upon it, when it would soar upward! How clear and strong the Eye! How vigorous every Sense! How exalted every Power! How delicate, yet how robust! How readily susceptible of Delights, and how capacious to receive them! As the Soul will embrace its Associate with special Complacency after so long a Separation, and especially when thus agreeably changed, so with what consummate

* Mat. xxiv. 31. † Eph. v. 27. ‡ Phil. iii. 21.

mate Pleasure will one Christian Friend meet another? With what Tendernefs and Transport fhall I run into your Bosom, while I stretch my Arms wide to take you into mine? I feel the sacred Ardour, and have you in a sweet Embrace by Anticipation. O, dear Sir, with what an unfelt Rapture fhall we fee the Judge descend from the celestial Heights? O the Glory and Beauty of his Countenance! A Majesty more than mortal! A Sweetnefs and Complacency surpassing that of a Father and Bridegroom! Were not our Eyes strengthened, a thousandth Part of his Glory would dazzle into Blindnefs! O blessed Morning! which not only puts a Period to all our Sorrows, but raises the human Nature to its original Strength, and gives Perfection to our Joy!

BUT hark! Silence is commanded in the heavenly Court: And how soon is all still as Midnight itself, while the Blaze shining round the Court is much more glorious than meridian Splendour. --- Whose Name was that, which was then pronounced, with a Summons by an angelic Voice? ----- So I thought ---- It was surely mine ----- And am I now to appear before the Judge of all the Earth? ---- My Soul is filled with the Apprehension. ----- But why, O my Heart, dost thou thus heave with Anxiety? Shake off this Terror; fortify thyself against this Trembling: This Appearance, however awful, will be eventually to thine abundant Comfort. I will lift up my Head with Joy. It is Matter of strong Consolation, that I am not to be judged by *the Co-*
venant

venant of Works; that would have been terrible, for my Conscience tells me I have violated it in Ten Thousand Instances; and, according to that Constitution, there is *no Room for Repentance* or Mercy, *though sought carefully with Tears* *. But it will be the *Gospel*, which will be the Rule †; that Gospel which I embraced and adhered to. I will appeal to that and its Promises, and my Judge will allow the Appeal. I often exercised Repentance towards God, and Faith in our Lord *Jesus Christ*; I often renounced those sinful Lusts, which, as so many Lords, had usurped Dominion over me, and at the same Time renounced my own Righteousness for my Justification; I, according to the Tenor of the everlasting and well ordered Covenant, devoted and committed myself to the Lord, ever to abide by the Choice I made, and with full purpose of Heart to cleave to him. Cannot I appeal to him with regard to my Integrity? --- But I am again summoned by Name. --- O the Smiles of the Judge, which I meet! Never did Honey melt with that Sweetness upon the Tongue, as the Words of my Judge distil themselves into my Ear, while I hear him say, “ † Come, thou blessed of my Father, “inherit the Kingdom prepared for thee from the “Foundation of the World.”

How does *Grace* triumph in this Sentence? How *Blessed* those whom the *faithful Jesus* pronounces so? How *Blessed* they that || are blessed by him

* Heb. xii. 17. † Rom. ii. 16. ‡ Matt. xxv. 34. || Psalm cxxxiv. 3.

him who made Heaven and Earth? The Words of Men often flatter and deceive! if they are indeed the Expressions of Good-will, yet they are like the unfeathered Arrow, which drops to the Ground short of the Mark, being unsupported by Power. But if He blesses, in whose Smiles Angels rejoice, and all the Orders of Cherubs and Seraphs triumph, my Capacities must needs be filled, and I have nothing to fear.

If He calls me blessed of his Father, the Father of *Jesus*, and in him *my* Father, it will be no common Blessing. I may *then* humbly expect *all* that *Emanuel* hath purchased, all that the Promises are enriched with, all the Fruits of Electing Love, Redeeming Grace, Adopting Honour, a Justifying Righteousness, and of all that Mercy and Power that shone forth in my Sanctification, begun and carried on-through the various Stages of Time, and in the Midst of a thousand Difficulties and Dangers.

How rich is the Divine Benignity, when a *Kingdom* is the Product of it? He giveth like a GOD! a Throne for every Saint! Robes of Light; Unwithering Palms! A Kingdom that cannot be moved! Immortal, undecaying Glories! There is nothing to sully the Lustre, or tarnish the Attire of the Saint. These divine Honours are prepared in the divine Decree before the Foundation of the World: and, when all the Measurers of Time cease to roll, yea, shall be thrown into one general Confusion and
 Ruin,

Ruin, they shall be as verdant as the young Olive,
as fresh and fragrant as the opening Rose.

WITH what Surprize, affectionate and humble, will the Saint attend to the Sentence of that Day? How unworthy will he acknowledge himself? And even cover his Face with modest Confusion! “How little, cries he, did I, could I
“do for my Lord, and how largely does he reward? If I loved him yet how weak and
“languid was my Affection to him who was all
“Loveliness and Love? It called for Shame on
“my Part, and I feared Resentment on his.
“And if I did love him, it was but the Rebound
“of his Love to me. It was his kind Finger
“that touched and couched my blind and dis-
“ordered Eye; he then displayed his amiable
“Beauties, and, being circumcised in Heart to
“a spiritual Disposition, I loved him. And
“what could I do less? And yet he calls the
“Love *mine*, and rewards it, as if it were my
“own Production. That he should pardon my
“countless Sins of Ignorance and Presumption,
“is wonderful Grace! that he should accept me,
“is more so; but that he should bestow a King-
“dom on me, to be enjoyed through endless
“Ages, is a Display of Love that wants a Name.
“I am swallowed up in Wonder, while I gaze;
“I prize the Crown bestowed; I adore the
“Hand that places it on my unworthy Head; I
“cast it with humble Gratitude before the
“Throne, ascribing the Glory where it is due.
“That a *Worm* should be so exalted; that a
“Wretch

" Wretch, taken as it were from the Dunghill,
 " should be so washed and adorned; that such a
 " Rebel should be both pardoned and preferred:
 " that one who was hastning to Hell, and had
 " wandered into the very Suburbs of it, should
 " be brought to Glory: These are Instances of
 " Grace that Want a Tongue to acknowledge,
 " an Harp to celebrate, and an Heart to con-
 " ceive far superior to mine: And O Eternity's
 " too short to utter all the Praise."

THUS I rode on, while the placid Weather,
 and the widely expanded Downs gave no Inter-
 ruption to my Thoughts. How solemn, how
 delightful was the Scene? Sometimes I was
 so far abstracted from Sense, and swallowed
 up with Meditation, that I knew nothing of
 what passed about me; whether the Birds con-
 tinued to sing, the Flocks to bleat, or the
 more noisy Herd to low. When I arrived
 at my own Home, how unfit was I for Con-
 verse with mortal Persons and Concerns? How
 aukward was I in the Management of common
 Affairs? I recollect I saw Wonder in the Coun-
 tenances of those around me. My Thoughts re-
 bounded from earthly Things, if I attempted to
 fix them; my Supper was no Meal; I sat down
 with my Family; but I was already replenished
 with the sweeter Manna, could hardly keep the
 Possession of myself, and was ready to act *as the*
mighty Man, who shouted by reason of Wine *.

THE

* Psalm lxxviii. 65.

THE Evening was now past, and you will be ready to conclude that the Curtain now dropped, and the Scene entirely closed, when I lay down upon my Bed, and Sleep had closed my Eyes. But it was otherwise; I had not been long composed, for my Thoughts were too much agitated by the Passages of the Day to permit me to sleep soon, before a Storm of Thunder and Lightning arose. I was not used to be uncommonly affected with such *Phænomena*; but this Tempest was something so very awful, that the like perhaps has been but seldom known; at the same Time Torrents of Rain, shall I say descended, or rushed down with the utmost Violence; and, to complete the Horror of the Night, Notice was given of Fire having broke out, by the most doleful Exclamations and heart-rending Shrieks. He must have been hardened into more than Marble, who would lie in his Bed, unless chained there by unconquerable Sickness. And now what a Scene opened itself? My Pen cannot describe it, so as to convey the Idea to you. It could be known only by seeing. The Fire that had broken out, was at a Distance, but yet fronting my Chamber-window; sometimes flashing out with an outrageous Blaze, and at other Times stifled with a gloomy Cloud of Smoke. The Rain still poured down; Floods of Water overspread and deepened in the Street. The great Artillery of Heaven proceeded to give forth their Explosions, and dreadful were their Vollies. All this while the People were gathering together, as the Violence of the Storm would permit.

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mit, and their indistinct and promiscuous Voices produced a general Murmur. I immediately recollected the Descriptions which the holy Scriptures had given of the Preludes of *Christ's* coming to Judgment, "*A Fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about *.*"

Thron'd on a Cloud our God shall come,
Bright Flames prepare his Way;
Thunder and Darknefs, Fire and Storm,
Lead on the dreadful Day. *Watts.*

INDEED all Nature now seemed in Confusion; the Elements commingled; a Chaos seemed to be advancing with hasty Steps; and he must have been a very Stoic, whose Passions were quite asleep, or a Christian beyond the common Pitch, who did not shrink amidst such an hideous Mixture of Tumult and Terror.

Scarce sounds so far
The dreadful Frigor, when some southern
Blast
Tears from the *Alps* a Ridge of knotty Oaks
Deep-fang'd, and ancient Tenants of the Rock;
The massy Fragment, many a Rood in Length
With hideous Crash rolls down the rugged
Cliff
Resistless, plunging in the subject Lake

K

Ccma'

* Psalm l. 3.

Como' or *Lugaine*; th' afflicted Waters roar,
And various Thunder all the Vallies fills.

Watts.

MAY divine Grace, my Friend, prepare us
for Events far more solemn than these! May
our Lot be among God's Chosen, and may he
say to us, amidst all Terrors arising from convulsed and dissolving Nature, "I am thy Shield
"and thy exceeding great Reward." Thus
shall we look down upon the Ruins of a burning
World, and say we have lost nothing. Excuse all Faults, communicate your better
Thoughts, and believe me to be, worthy Sir,

Your's inviolably, &c.

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